The Preservation of Jewish Religious Books in Sixteenth-Century Germany: Johannes Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel*

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The Preservation of Jewish Religious Books in Sixteenth-Century Germany: Johannes Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel*

Edited and Translated by

Daniel O'Callaghan

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For My Wife, Irmgard

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUGENSPIEGEL	*Doctor Johannsen Reuchlins/ der K.M. als Ertzhertzogen zu Osterreich auch Chur/ fürsten vnd fürsten gemainen bundtrichters inn/ Schwaben warhafftige entschuldigung/ gegen vnd wider ains getaufften iuden/ genant Pfefferkorn vormals ge/ truckt vßgangen vnwarhaf/ tigs schmachbüchlin/* AUGENSPIEGEL Woodcut with a pair of spectacles. Laurel leaves decorate the the inside of the lenses. *Am end dißes büchlins findet man ain correctur etlicher wörter so inn den truck versehnen sind im teuschen vnnd latin/ bezaichnet durch die zal der bletter*
Augenspiegel; ed. Ehlers (1999)	The complete text with a German and Latin transcription and including Reuchlin's defence appears in: Johannes Reuchlin: *Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al., vol. 4/1 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 15–168.
Bibliotheca Palatina ed. Mittler (1986)	Mittler, Elmar, et al. (eds.): *Bibliotheca Palatina*: Textband (Heidelberg, 1986). (Katalog zur Ausstellung der Universität Heidelberg in Zusammenarbeit mit der Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana).
CCL	*Corpus christianorum, series Latina* vols. 72–78. *S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera* (Turnhout, 1959–1970); vol. 76A ed. Marcus Adriaen (Turnhout, 1970).
CCEL ed. A. Goldbacher	*Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, vol. 44 (ed). A. Goldbacher (Vienna, 1904).
CSEL ed. I. Hilberg	*Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum* 54–56: I. Hilberg ed. *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi epistulae* (Vienna; 1910–1918).

CHB	Ackroyd, Peter R., et al. (eds.): *The Cambridge History of the Bible*. 3 vols (Cambridge, 1969–1970); (rpr. Cambridge, 1987).
Contemporaries of Erasmus eds. P.G. Bietenholz & T.B. Deutscher	Bietenholz, Peter G., and Deutscher, Thomas B. (eds.): *Contemporaries of Erasmus*: *A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*. 3 vols (Toronto, 1985–1987).
Dall'Asta: *Briefwechsel* (ed.)	Reuchlin, Johannes: *Johannes Reuchlin Briefwechsel*. Edited by Matthias Dall'Asta and Gerald Dörner (eds.): 3 vols (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999, 2003 and 2007).
Defensio; ed. Ehlers (1999)	Reuchlin, Johannes: *Defensio Ioannis Reuchlin*/ *Phorcensis LL. Doctoris contra calumniato*/ *res suos Colo*/ *nienses/Summarium libri.* (Thomas Anshelm, Tübingen, 1513). The Latin text with a modern German translation appears in Johannes Reuchlin: *Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al., vol. 4/1 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 196–443.
EJ (2007) ed. F. Skolnik	Skolnik, Fred (ed.): *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. 17 vols (Farmington Hills, Minn., 2007).
Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*	Geiger, Ludwig: *Johann Reuchlin. Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Leipzig, 1871); (repr. Nieuwkoop, 1964).
Grimm	Grimm, Jakob, and Grimm, Wilhelm (eds.): *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. 16 vols (1st ed. Leipzig, 1854–1960); 33 vols (repr. Munich, 1984).
HDA	Bächtold-Stäubli, Hans, and Hoffmann-Krayer, Eduard von (eds.): *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*. 10 vols (Berlin, 1927); (repr. Berlin, 1987).
Gutachten; Leinz-von Dessauer, ed., (1965)	Reuchlin, Johannes: *Gutachten über das Jüdische Schrifttum*: *Edited and Transl.* by Antonie Leinz-von Dessauer, (Constance, 1965), pp. 27–110.
J. Encyclopedia eds. C. Adler et al.	*Jewish Encyclopedia* C. Adler, G. Deutsch, K. Kohler (eds.) 12 vols (New York 1901–1906).
Lempriere's Classical Dictionary	Lempriere, J. (ed.): *A Classical Dictionary* (London, n.d. [around 1900]).
LMA	Bautier, Robert-Henri, Auty, Robert, and Angermann, Norbert (eds.): *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. 10 vols (Munich, 1980–1999).

LThK	Höfer, Josef, and Rahner, Karl (eds.): *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. 14 vols, 1st ed. (Freiburg, 1957–1968); (repr. Freiburg, 1986).
PG	*Patrologia cursus completus series Graeca*, 162 vols, J.P. Migne (ed.) (Paris, 1857–1912).
PL	*Patrologia cursus completus series Latina*, 221 vols J.P. Migne (ed.) (Paris, 1844–1864).
Reuchlin: Werke; ed. Ehlers (1999)	Reuchlin, Johannes: *Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al., vol. 4/1 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999).
RSV	May, Herbert G., and Metzger, Bruce M. (eds.): *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*: *Revised Standard Version* (New York, 1977).
Temporini	Temporini, Hildegard (ed.): *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*: *Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. 91 vols (Berlin, 1972–1979).
TRE	Krause, Gerhard, and Müller, Gerhard (eds.): *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. 40 vols (Berlin, 1977–1998).
Tütsch missiue; ed. Ehlers (1999)	*Doctor Johanns Reuchlins tütsch missiue, warumb die Juden so lang im ellend sind*. [Thomas Anshelm, Pforzheim, 1505]. The transscribed text appears in: Johannes Reuchlin: *Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al., vol. 4/1 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 3–12.
Verfasserlexikon ed. Ruh.	Stammler, Wolfgang, and Langosch, Karl (eds.): *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters*. Verfasserlexikon. 11 vols (Berlin, 1933 ff.), (2nd ed. Berlin, 1978 ff.). Ruh, Kurt (ed.), vols. 1–8 (1978–1992).
Verzeichnis der Hebraica	Abel, Wolfgang von, and Leicht, Reimund (eds.): *Verzeichnis der Hebraica in der Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins* (Stuttgart, 2005).

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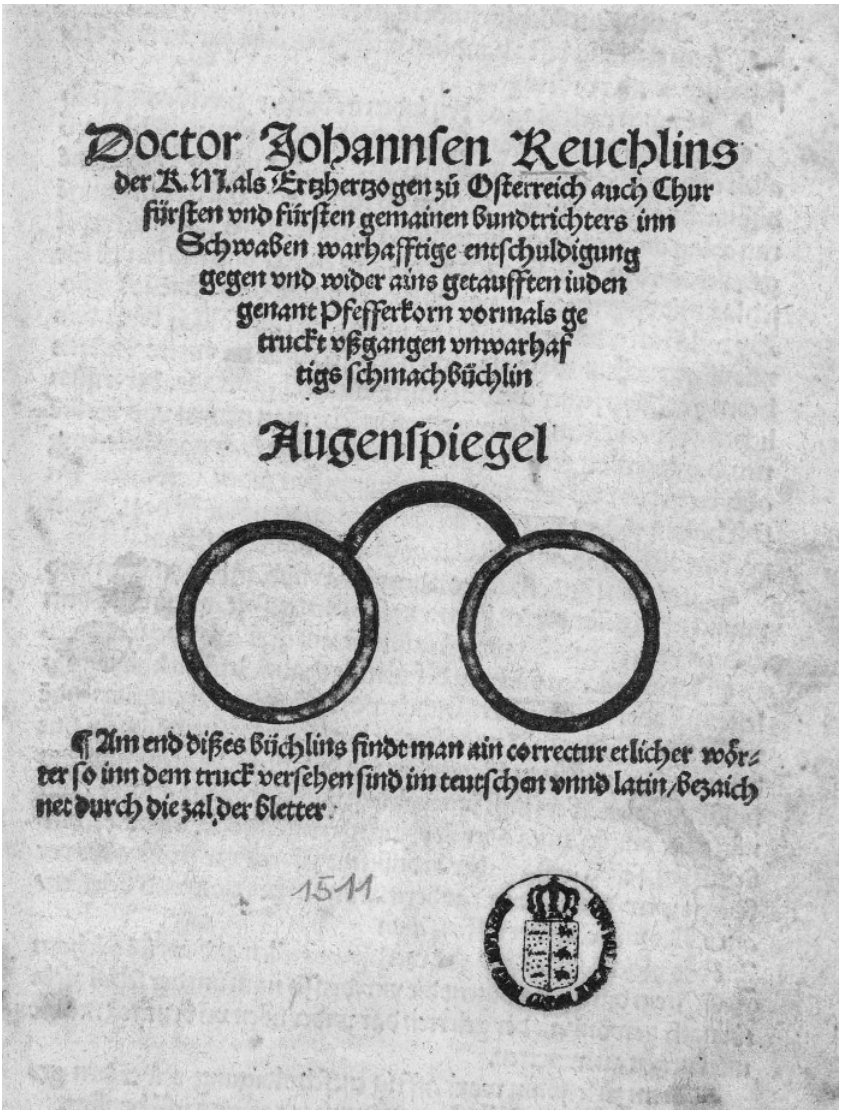
Although every effort is made to avoid errors in the translation and commentary, readers are sure to find some and for these I am solely responsible.


Doctor Johannsen Reuchlins
der K. M. als Ertzhertzogen zů Osterreich auch Chur
fürsten vnd fürsten gemainen bundtrichters im
Schwaben warhafftige entschuldigung
gegen vnd wider ains getaufften iuden
genant Pfefferkorn vormals ge
truckt vßgangen vnwarhaf
tigs schmachbüchlin

Augenspiegel

¶ Am end dißes büchlins findt man ain correctur etlicher wör-
ter so inn dem truck versehen sind im teutschen vnnd latin/bezaich
net durch die zal der bletter.

1511

INTRODUCTION

Johannes Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel* is a text of scholarship and sophistication that has attracted comment and analysis since it was first published in 1511. This derives from its aim which was to prevent the destruction of Jewish religious texts, a form of literature considered at best irrelevant or at worst a threat to the Christian culture of sixteenth-century Europe. The text generated such a vigorous reaction during the author's lifetime both from detractors and supporters that it was eventually banned and the author forbidden to make any further comment on it. Since then generations of scholars have queried the author's motives for writing such a contentious document. They have scrutinised the *Augenspiegel* in their searches, but have usually failed to provide a satisfactory explanation, and more often disregarded the reality of the author's views.

It would, however, be too simple to lay-up criticism for their lack of discernment, and ignore the complexity of the document. The text is interwoven with legal and lexicographical definitions in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin in addition to legal science arguments with citations from Civil and Canon Law. It refers to authors of esoteric texts often incomprehensible to Reuchlin's contemporaries as they were written in Greek and Hebrew, languages then rarely understood. Furthermore it was published at a time of considerable political and religious debate on reform, when competing institutions attempted to initiate changes in the Holy Roman Empire that greatly affected the division of political power, the administration of law, and the forms of piety. Reuchlin was not divorced from these upheavals and formed his personal religion in the midst of these changes. As an educated layman in an era when the State and Church were no longer the edifices that prescribed the individual's place in society he sought spiritual salvation in the new intellectual streams of thought that were then arising. These religious views are used to interpret Canon and Civil Law as it applied to a minority group in his society. The *Augenspiegel* text reveals Reuchlin's independence of mind in his approach to the question of the destruction of Jewish literature. His mindset was derived from a personal Christian philosophy, conjectured from Church teachings and combined with study of the Jewish esoteric philosophy, the Cabbala. The contemporary changes which society was undergoing encouraged him to freely pursue linguistic and theological studies to find religious perfection. Arising from

his singular knowledge of Hebrew and his Greek readings he concluded that many religious texts available in Latin were incorrect and unreliable, and consequently the answers to theological questions were incorrect or based on false premises. Authoritative works he says should be read in their original languages to ensure the veracity of meaning.[1] Based on his linguistic studies he concludes that Jewish texts were superior to Christian Latin translations, and these original texts were essential to his own search for spiritual development. He believed that the evangelical purity of faith that he sought was hidden in the Scriptures and in Jewish Cabbalistic philosophy. The key to their understanding, he maintains, is to be found in Hebrew sources. In pursuing such a course it was inevitable that he would pose a challenge to the monopolist teaching of theology and Scripture by the Catholic Church and the university faculties. He never considered his research to be a deviation from orthodox belief, but a legitimate correction and a contribution to the scholarly studies taking place elsewhere in society. He was not alone in this pursuit as he belonged to a fluid group of intellectuals who pointed out many inaccuracies in the body of accepted knowledge. These humanists sought to present to society authoritative texts from Greek and Latin sources to be used as the basis for learning, and the study of philosophy. He differed from others, however, as his text is not concerned with intellectual challenges to established knowledge but with the treatment of a religious minority.

Contrary to the widely disseminated polemical writings that portrayed Judaism as a continual threat to the existence of Christian society, he concluded that not only could Jews be of assistance in the provision of original texts, with accurate translations of the Old Testament, but he also believed they possessed a secret wisdom, the esoteric philosophy of the Cabbala. If they could be prevailed upon to divulge these teachings to Christians, it would benefit the initiated, and lead them to a deeper insight into the mysteries of their beliefs. The course of the debate would have remained in academic circles had not a personal attack on his integrity been made by the anti-Semite Johannes Pfefferkorn, determined to eradicate all Jewish religious literature. The publication of Reuchlin's pamphlet became thus all the more imperative as Jewish communities were under threat throughout Christian Europe due to such attacks. Their forcible expulsion from the German speaking lands and the burning of their books would mean the destruction of Jewish culture and with it the irreparable loss of knowledge

[1] See Erika Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin*: *Religious and Social Controversy in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Toronto, 2002), p. viii.

not alone to Judaism but also imperative for the study of Christian texts. He hoped that by the publication of the *Augenspiegel*, he would generate sufficient support for his views among scholars and educated lay people that they would cause the authorities to reconsider their coercive measures. The publication did not have the desired effect he wished, but it led to a moratorium on the destruction of Jewish books that he achieved alone through his independence of mind and civil courage. It is this latter human characteristic makes him an exemplary figure. He is among the few European scholars who have been morally tested for their contribution to humanity and who at great personal cost refused to deviate or retract their views despite the threat of serious legal sanctions. He may not have changed his society but he did point to an alternative direction for it to develop a more tolerant approach towards communites who hold variant and even contrary religious beliefs to those of the majority. He concludes from his reflection that basic human rights were inherent to all under the jurisdiction of the Holy Roman Empire and not dependent on a particular religious persuasion, a view that was not to be promulgated in many parts of Europe until centuries later. Religious beliefs were a matter of personal decision in society and were not to be prescribed by church or state but were to be left to the individual to pursue them in peace and tranquility. He made his views known, the onus was on others to follow.

There still remain many unanswered questions to Reuchlin's views and motives for the *Augenspiegel*. His personal beliefs, particularly those relating to his understanding of Cabbalism, have not yet been fully analysed though I maintain they were most influential for the publication. Future research will help our understanding of this farsighted individual and of how the views expressed in the *Augenspiegel* evolved.

The text presented here is the first complete English translation with a Commentary and notes on the *Augenspiegel*. It is hoped it will enable those unfamiliar with sixteenth century German language to read a document that has relevance for the world community since it first appeared in print in 1511. It aims to provide the interested reader, student and specialist historian of the early period of German Reformation history with an insight into the thinking of a controversial German humanist and his occupation with Hebrew studies with an account with of the most recent research completed on him. It provides some biographical details with an account of his legal studies and why they are often seen to be basis of his arguments in the text. The translation attempts to show, however, that Joahannes Reuchlin's treatise can best be comprehended by reflection on his spirituality. Hence an account is given of his occupation with unorthdox Christian Cabblistic

studies. It describes the libel affair that led to the immediate publication of the *Augenspiegel* and the controversial debate that followed. It suggests how the publication led to a widespread reawaking of scholarly interest in Jewish books and to the first serious consideration of Judaism as a coexistant religion in a Christian society. It points to the reaction of the church and state authorites to the question of Judaism in an era of transformation in Europe.

CHAPTER ONE

JOHANNES REUCHLIN—HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

One of the most contentious pamphlets in sixteenth-century[1] Germany was the *Augenspiegel* by Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522). It differed from the general trend of printed pamphlets written by educated laymen, for unlike those of his contemporaries, Reuchlin's booklet dealt with Jewish religious literature, a theme ignored by humanist writers. The authors of this intellectual movement sought to uncover the true foundation of knowledge

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[1] More recently David Price: *Johannes Reuchlin and the campaign to destroy Jewish books* (New York, 2011). Johannes Pfefferkorn: *The Jews' mirror* (*Judenspiegel*); translated by Ruth I. Cape with a historical introduction by Maria Diemling (Arizona, 2011). (Medieval and Renaissance texts and studies, vol. 390), here pp. 20–32.

Older accounts of the affair appear in Ludwig Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin. Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Leipzig, 1871); (repr. Nieuwkoop, 1964), pp. 205–240.

Heinrich Graetz: 'Von der Verbannung der Juden aus Spanien und Portugal bis zur dauernden Ansiedelung der Marranen in Holland (1618)', in idem: *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, vol. 9 (Leipzig, 1866), pp. 73–171. S.A. Hirsch 'Johann Pfefferkorn and the Battle of the Books' in: *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. 4. No. 2 (Jan 1892), pp. 256–288. Willy Cohen: 'Johannes Reuchlin', in: *Jüdisches Lexikon. Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens*, here vol. 4/1 (1987), col. 1424 ff. Max Brod: *Johann Reuchlin und sein Kampf* : *Eine historische Monographie* (Stuttgart, 1965), pp. 178–280.

Salo Wittmayer Baron: *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. 13 (2nd ed. New York, 1969), pp. 182–191. James H. Overfield: *Humanism and Scholasticism in Late Medieval Germany* (Princeton, 1984), pp. 247–297. See the entry for 'Reuchlin, Johannes (1455–1522)', in: *TRE*, vol. 29, pp. 94–98. Winfried Trusen: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die Fakultäten. Voraussetzungen und Hintergründe des Prozesses gegen den *Augenspiegel*', in Gundolf Keil, Bernd Moeller, and Winfried Trusen (eds.): *Der Humanismus und die oberen Fakultäten* (Weinheim, 1987), pp. 115–157. Heinz Scheible: 'Johann Reuchlin of Pforzheim (1454/5–30 June 1522)', in Peter G. Bietenholz & Thomas B. Deutscher (eds.): *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 3, (Toronto, 1987) pp. 145–150. See the entry for 'Reuchlin, Johannes', in Walther Killy (ed.): *Literaturlexikon*: *Autoren und Werke deutscher Sprache*. 15 vols., (Gütersloh, 1988–1991), here vol. 9, pp. 398–400. Frank D. Smith: 'The Reuchlin controversy', in: *Journal of Progressive Judaism*, 4 (1995), pp. 77–88. Hans-Rüdiger Schwab: *Johannes Reuchlin. Deutschlands erster Humanist*: *Ein biographisches Lesebuch* (Munich, 1998), pp. 128–176. He also provides a useful list of Reuchlin's various writings in modern German with some biographical details. Some biographical details in English are entered for 'Johannes Reuchlin' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 17, pp. 247–249.

More recently the scholarly article by Gerald Dörner, 'Reuchlin, Johannes', in: Franz Josef Worstbrock (ed.) *Deutscher Humanismus 1480–1520. Verfasserlexikon*, vol. 2, Lfg. 2, (Berlin / New York, 2011), cols. 579–633.

and introduced a mass of publications[2] in the vernacular to criticise publicly the social, political and intellectual norms prevailing, and to mobilise widespread demand for reform of the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy Roman Empire, and university education. These institutions were considered to be unresponsive to the nationalist, societal and spiritual aspirations of intellectuals and common people during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century in the German speaking territories of the Empire. Why these demands were not addressed resulted from the complex division of political and ecclesiastical power that prevailed within the Empire at this period. The area was the core of the Empire as it contained the principalities of the electors, the powerful princes who constituted the Electoral College, and a legal body that chose the emperor. As the German title of emperor was not hereditary these secular and ecclesiastical princes were a major political force without whose support no reform could be introduced. Many of these princely rulers had military and financial resources available that were superior to those of the emperor and thus wished to retain their freedom and privileges within their sovereign territories. They pursued political policies they perceived would enhance their individual dynastic powers. Their imperial interests lay more in implementing public order within their German territories, and in consolidation, expansion, and delineation of their territorial principalities and less with furthering the dynastic designs of the emperor.

Since the foundation of the Holy Roman Empire in the ninth century, the emperors attempted to pursue a rather vague political policy, known as the *translatio imperii*, which was based on a claim that the Empire was the only European political body established to defend Christianity from any force that might threaten it. Ideally, the Emperor's political aims should always combine with that policy, but these were often seen to be dynastic escapades that served only the ambitious and hegemonic designs of the ruling Habsburgs and neglected the interests of the Empire. Thus imperial politics was contradicted[3] by the ruling princes, though not always for the same reasons. They, too, were divided and feared the dominance of competing individual territorial lords but they all wished to secure permanent greater influence in the decision making of the Empire.[4] Feudal ties existed

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[2] For an account of the pamphlet literature on this topic at the time see Johannes Schwitalla: *Deutsche Flugschriften 1460–1525* (Tübingen, 1983), pp. 251–255.

[3] C. Scott, Dixon: *The Reformation in Germany* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 1–19.

[4] Peter H. Wilson: *The Holy Roman Empire 1495–1806* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 1–24.

(*Lehensverband*) to the Empire but they were neither dependable nor constant. Attempts to reassert imperial sovereignty were hindered by the lack of a standing imperial army, and the perilous financial state of the Habsburg Emperor made him vulnerable and dependent on the goodwill of his vassals for any reforms he wished to introduce. Military expeditions meant recourse to use of mercenaries[5] who were able to command considerable sums for their services. Military expenditure exceeded the income from the hereditary lands and resulted in the introduction of a universal tax following the Diet of Worms in 1495, to be paid by Christians aged 15 and older, and by all Jews.[6] The geographical extent of the Empire's boundaries, which in 1459 ranged from the Baltic Sea to Northern Italy and from Hungary to Burgundy and Brabant were weakly administered. External threats to the eastern part of the Empire, and, it was feared, to the entire Christian world arose from Ottoman imperialism. The fall of the Byzantine capital Constantinople in 1453, and the Turkish encroachment into the Balkans, failed to unite the Imperial Estates into any concerted action to protect the empire and the religion of its residents. It was also the most active area of John Hus (1372–1415)[7] with his pre-Reformation reform and nationalistic movements which had posed a major challenge to the orthodox teaching of the Church and to the policy of the Holy Roman Empire almost a century earlier.

Political relations were complex and diverse between the Estates and the German emperor. Policies aimed to improve the medieval economic system, strengthen political alliances or reform the laxity of clerics and religious houses in the territories became the responsibility of the territorial lords. Church appointments within the territories were subject to Canon Law, but any clerical appointment, be it at parish level or higher, required the assent and support of the sovereign lord even if only to retain peaceful relations and avoid a possible long dispute with the designated bishop. Feuds also developed within episcopal territories in power struggles between bishops and their chapters proving ideal opportunities for intervention by territorial princes in clerical disputes. In this way territorial

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[5] Jean Bérenger: *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1273–1700, Transl.* by C.A. Simpson (New York, 1994), pp. 123–138, here p. 127.

[6] Tom Scott: 'Germany and the Empire', in Christopher T. Allmand (ed.): *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 7 (1998), pp. 337–366, here p. 354.

[7] John Klassen: 'Hus, The Hussites and Bohemia', in Christopher T. Allmand (ed.): *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 7 (1998), pp. 367–391.

princes obtained considerable political influence on church affairs,[8] and were able to introduce reforms which the church authorities were unable or unwilling to implement. Political power distribution was further complicated by the rights and privileges granted to a number of wealthy free imperial cities. Residents of these urban communes acquired a level of independence to develop their cultural and economic interests[9] under the protection of a charter of imperial rights, often obtained in return for their financial contributions and declarations of loyalty to the Emperor. Some cities like Augsburg and Nuremberg were economically so powerful in their own right that they were able to provide loans for their overlords and thus gained independence through the dependence of their lord on the city to finance his expenditure.[10] The Fugger family of Augsburg granted the Emperor Maximilian considerable sums of money in return for mine concessions and helped him to avoid bankruptcy.[11] Aside from such wealthy families and cities another important and lucrative source of revenue for the imperial coffers was taxation of Jews.

Relations between Christians and Jews within the empire were fragile and subject to the whims of all political forces. They were the objects of popular belief, and subject to the rigid control of the Church. Their continued existence was seen, at best, as source of monetary value but more often as a threat to the society. They remained outside the scope and criticism of the humanist movement though these intellectuals, resident in these cities, were not immune from the currents of shifting political power, and voiced criticisms and raised issues of public debate. Scholars, on good personal terms with their sovereign rulers, were free to pursue their critical studies, and were protected by their overlords from possible legal sanctions that could be initiated against them by the Church or the imperial authorities. The growth of an educated civil society and the development of pluralistic debates that questioned man's place in society, however, left the Jewish religious minority untouched in their scholarly pursuits. Their

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[8] Christoph Volkmar, *Reform statt Reformation. Die Kirchenpolitik Herzog Georgs von Sachsen 1488–1525* (Tübingen, 2008), p. 614.

[9] Berndt Hamm: *Bürgertum und Glaube. Konturen der städtischen Reformation* (Göttingen, 1996), pp. 15–128.

[10] See the overview by Georg Schmidt: 'Deutschland am Beginn der Neuzeit: Reichs-Staat und Kulturnation?', in Christine Roll, Bettina Braun, and Heide Stratenwerth (eds.): *Recht und Reich im Zeitalter der Reformation. Festschrift für Horst Rabe* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 1–30.

[11] J. Bérenger: *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1273–1700*, pp. 126–127.

language and beliefs were not considered important enough to demand the rigour of independent study. Thus any knowledge of them was based very often on polemical publications.

In popular belief the Jewish community was accused of having an ineradicable hatred of Christians, being followers of the Antichrist, and the cause of social, religious and economic upheaval of the period[12] and responsible for various acts of agitation.[13] Tales of ritual murder of Christian children,[14] poisoning of wells, desecration of sacred hosts and other misdeeds were communicated aurally and by way of printed material. One of the most abhorrent images widely circulated was a woodcut depicting the ritual murder of Simon of Trent, in which a group of Jews are seen to be stabbing a Christian youth to obtain his blood. This depiction published in 1475 was used as an icon for those unable to travel to the city to touch the relics of the deed.[15] Aspects of popular piety in Christian belief were often ridiculed by educated lay people but iconography involving Jews with graphic scenes of bloodshed went without comment. On the contrary, state official documents appeared to confirm such accusations. The Emperor Maximilian's deed, listing the grounds for banning all Jews from his Austrian territories in 1496, includes accusations of murder and of pauperising the people through forgery and fraudulent practices.[16] During Reuchlin's lifetime Jewish communities were expelled from almost all the towns and cities of the German speaking territories[17] including the areas where he lived and worked.[18] Thus

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[12] On the deterioration of the economy and its accompanying social effects see Franz Irsigler: 'Luthers Herkunft und Umwelt-Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft der Zeit', in Gerhard Bott (ed.): *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland* (Nuremberg, 1983), pp. 17–40.

[13] Jonathan I. Israel: *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism 1515–1750* (Oxford, 1985), p. 6.

[14] For an account of the superstitions, attitudes and treatment of Jews in this period see Ronnie Po-chia Hsia: *The Myth of Ritual Murder*: *Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven, 1988), pp. 50–65. Also the article by Miri Rubin 'Making a Martyr: William of Norwich and the Jews' in: *History Today*, 60 (2010), (1), pp. 48–54.

[15] Richard I. Cohen: *Jewish Icons: Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley, 1998), pp. 11–27. See also Ronnie Po-chia Hsia "Jewish magic in Early Modern Germany" in: *Religion and culture in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Kirksville, 1989) (*Sixteenth century essays & studies*, vol. 11) pp. 81–97.

[16] Georg Schmidt-von Rhein (ed.): *Kaiser Maximilian I. Bewahrer und Reformer* (Ramstein, 2002), p. 298. (Katalog zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung).

[17] See Arno Herzig: 'Die Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit Reuchlins', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 11–20, here p. 12.

[18] See Joachim Fischer: 'Bevölkerung und Sozialstruktur', in Joachim Fischer, Peter Amelung and Wolfgang Irtenkauf, (eds): Katalog: *Württemberg im Spätmittelalter*. Ausstellung

Jewish society was portrayed in popular texts as opposed to Christianity, to be feared and above all to be avoided. This led to several forms of agitation against Jewish communities. The form depended very often on local circumstances and on the social status of the agitator and varied from pogroms to expulsion, economic restrictions, and clothing ordinances.

The Church's official attitude to Jews as a minority in Christian society varied over the centuries from tolerance to missionary campaigns to convert them. Different approaches to interacting with them were taken within the geographical regions of Europe. This was influenced by the political and theological policies pursued by the papacy, which either saw the Jews as proof of the triumph of Christianity over Judaism or as a threat to it.[19] Judaism always required particular consideration due to the closeness of its religious ideology with Christianity, and the inclusion of the Old Testament Scriptures of the Jewish Bible in the canon of the Christian Bible. Furthermore, a literate religious community that was not within the Catholic Church was a constant cause of anxiety and a source of suspicion, as education and literacy were the domain of the ecclesiastical authorities from the early Middle Ages. The chief weapon adopted by investigators against heresy and unorthodox beliefs was the book[20] and therefore, a community that used extensive written texts and memorisation in their religious practices was always a challenge, but more often considered a threat to be countered.

At the period of publication of Reuchlin's text restrictive policies were being applied to Jews in many regions. His publication, which was apparently concerned with the defence of a defiant religious group, demanded the particular attention of the ecclesiastical authorities. In spite of having no significant effect on any of the changes the society was undergoing, yet it occupied the minds of some of the most prominent humanists of the day and continues to be a source of debate to the present. It was the first publication by a Christian to give a scholarly consideration to the writings of a minority community whose very existence then was seen to be a continued threat to the survival of Christian society. Several attempts have been

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des Hauptstaatsarchivs Stuttgart und der Württembergischen Landesbibliothek (Stuttgart, 1985), pp. 97–106, here p. 105. Also the article by Joachim Fischer et al.: 'Das Haus Württemberg', ibid., pp. 7–33, here p. 27.

[19] See Robert Chazan: *The Jews of Medieval Western Christendom, 1000–1500* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 23–42.

[20] See here the article by R.I. Moore, 'Literacy in the making of heresy, c. 1000–1150', in Peter Biller, and Anne Hudson (eds.): *Heresy and Literacy 1000–1530* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 19–37, here p. 23.

made to explain why Reuchlin, a Christian at the age of 55, and well known as a translator and author of Greek texts, should write a tract sympathetic to such a group and posit views contrary to those held by many in his own society. A number of writers have suggested reasons, but very often they have ignored Reuchlin's viewpoint, or misrepresented it in order to present him as a liberal icon to the world in a way they would like him to be seen, or they simply misunderstood his philosophy. As to this dilemma, Reuchlin himself is not without blame, not least because of the complicated nature of the text which portrays him as a philologist, philosopher, legalist, and esoteric. The historiography of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as represented by the two Jewish scholars H. Graetz (1817–1891) and Reuchlin's biographer,[21] L. Geiger (1848–1919), also contributed to the misrepresentation of Reuchlin's aim. Graetz views the conflict that followed the publication of the *Augenspiegel* as the beginning of the Reformation movement in the German speaking areas. He poses the question whether Martin Luther (1483–1546) was not a disaster for the Germans and might not Reuchlin have been a better reformer of the Church and State.[22] It was Reuchlin who uttered the

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[21] The standard biography of Johannes Reuchlin, although dated and in need of revision, is by L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*. For more recent biographical research see Hansmartin Decker-Hauff: 'Bausteine zur Reuchlin-Biographie', in Manfred Krebs, and Hermann Kling (eds.): *Johannes Reuchlin 1455–1522*: *Festgabe seiner Vaterstadt Pforzheim zur 500. Wiederkehr seines Geburtstages* (revis. ed. Sigmaringen, 1994), pp. 83–107; Stefan Rhein: 'Reuchliniana I. Neue Bausteine zur Biographie Johannes Reuchlins', in idem, pp. 277–284. Stefan Rhein 'Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522): Ein deutscher "uomo universale"', in: Paul Gerhard Schmidt (ed.): *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten*: *Biographische Profile* (2nd ed. Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 59–76.

For Reuchlins's letters see Ludwig Geiger (ed.): *Johann Reuchlins Briefwechsel* (Tübingen, 1875). The Heidelberg Akademie der Wissenschaften, in cooperation with the city of Pforzheim, has published a revised three-volume edition. See: *Johannes Reuchlin Briefwechsel* by Matthias Dall'Asta and Gerald Dörner (eds.): 3 vols. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999, 2003 and 2007). (Hereafter as Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*). A four-volume, with a German translation has also been published. See: Johannes Reuchlin: *Briefwechsel*. Adalbert Weh, Georg Burkard & Matthias Dall' Asta: Leseausgabe. In deutscher Übersetzung, 4 vols. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2000, 2004, 2007 and 2011). For Reuchlin's works and publishers see Josef Benzing (ed.): *Bibliographie der Schriften Johann Reuchlins im 15. Jahrhundert* (Bad Bocklet, 1955), pp. 92–95. Accessed December 2011 at: http://digital.cjh.org:80/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=431433&silo_library=GEN01 Center for Jewish History Digital Collections. A comprehensive listing of all scholary works on Reuchlin and of his own writings is provided by G. Dörner, 'Reuchlin, Johannes', in: Franz Josef Worstbrock (ed.): *Deutscher Humanismus 1480–1520. Verfasserlexikon*, vol. 2 (Berlin/New York, 2011), cols. 579–633.

[22] H. Graetz: *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, vol. 9, p. 98. Julius H. Schoeps: 'Der Reuchlin-Pfefferkorn-Streit in der jüdischen Historiographie des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts', in Arno Herzig, et al. (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 203–224, here p. 207.

first 'stuttered sound expressing complete equality'[23] for the Jews of the Holy Roman Empire. This is true for the German speaking area of the Empire, but Graetz perceives Reuchlin's main opponents to be the Dominicans[24] at the University of Cologne. He claims they were determined to obtain the support of the civil authorities to ensure the Talmud would be confiscated, because of their insistence that this book was the source and cause that Jews were intensely anti-Christian. L. Geiger[25] opines anti-Judaism was probably an element of the argument, but his study of several texts related to the dispute and published at the time, shows that this was probably not the main issue. He considers Reuchlin to be a reformer and a scholar of Hebrew, an individual who sought freedom and tolerance to pursue scientific research,[26] in particular Biblical exegesis, but who became caught between the two streams of competing philosophical conflict, humanism and scholasticism that were present at Cologne's University theological faculty. He points out that after 1511, Reuchlin was no longer greatly concerned about Hebrew books or Jewish affairs, but had become more concerned about his freedom to pursue his intellectual research without the threat of prosecution for heresy. Thereby indicating the protection of Jewish knowledge was not his prime interest. In L. Geiger's view Reuchlin is no 'shining genius',[27] however, his philological studies in Hebrew and in Greek are a major innovative contribution to the epoch.[28] He sees Reuchlin's milder approach to the treatment of Jews, which was unlike many of his contemporaries', as a means to aid their conversion to Christianity, but not as an attempt to raise their status of citizenship to equal that of Christians.[29] The reaction to the publication of the *Augenspiegel* and the subsequent heresy trial he sees as a major factor in uniting humanists to form a public opinion in support of the freedom to pursue academic research. The attack on Reuchlin was a threat to the freedom of all humanists and therefore he should be defended.[30] Reuchlin's deep interest in mysticism, L. Geiger believes, caused him to

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[23] 'Der erste stotternd ausgesprochene Laut zu jenem begreifenden Worte vollständiger Gleichstellung'. H. Graetz: *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, vol. 9, p. 98.

[24] J.H. Schoeps: 'Der Reuchlin-Pfefferkorn-Streit in der jüdischen Historiographie des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts', p. 206.

[25] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 209, and note 1.

[26] Ibid., p. 240.

[27] Ibid., p. 61, and p. 251.

[28] Ibid., p. 103.

[29] Ibid., p. 164, and p. 233.

[30] Ibid., p. 323.

write on the Cabbala, but he attaches no particular religious significance to any of his publications. His apt comment: 'Es ist wohl selten ein Streit geführt worden wie dieser, wo beide Parteien, die im Kampfe lagen, das Objekt des Streites so wenig kannten'.[31]

W. Maurer,[32] writing almost a century later, maintains that Reuchlin is the erudite humanist who aims to interpret rabbinical literature and uses his knowledge of legal science to preserve it from destruction. He sees Reuchlin deriving his view of Judaism from his study of philosophy, in particular pythagorism and the Cabbala whose teachings are an integral part of Christian cultural inheritance. The synthesis of Greek and Jewish beliefs found in Christian philosophy provided the European Jewry with a legal right of protection and preservation in an era when their culture was being destroyed by discrimination and outbursts of violence in many countries. W. Maurer's view is important insofar as he attempts to focus on Reuchlin's philosophical and esoteric beliefs and their contribution to his view of society. Further research on this aspect of Reuchlin's life did not follow until more recently when the importance of the Cabbala for Reuchlin's personal salvation has become more evident.

M. Brod (1884–1968) raises Reuchlin to a position of supreme champion of ethical values and as one of the most outstanding medieval scholars,[33] who in spite of great adversity, not least from the Jews themselves who feared the adverse reaction of the Church, fought for the preservation of Jewish esoteric literature. M. Brod particularly emphasises Reuchlin's knowledge of the Jewish Cabbala and his Cabbalistic writings which provided later scholars with valuable sources. H. Graetz and L. Geiger adopted a more reserved attitude to these writings. In the nineteenth century the teachings of the Cabbala were no longer an accepted course of philosophical study amongst Hebrew clerics and were thus ignored. M. Brod's positive image of him is not borne out by Reuchlin's expressed view of the Jews, nor is there any evidence to suggest that he wishes to preserve Jewish secular literature, other than those books that he considers useful for the study of the Bible and the Cabbala.

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[31] It is very rare to find a dispute like this one to have taken place, where the two parties involved understood so little about the object of their contention. My translation. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 117, and note 1.

[32] See Wilhelm Maurer, 'Reuchlin und das Judentum', in: *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 9 (1952), pp. 535–544.

[33] See Margarita Pazi, 'Max Brod über Reuchlin', in Arno Herzig, et al. (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden*, pp. 213–224.

S. Baron sees the controversy as a 'heated debate' that 'arrayed the reactionary forces against the rising tide of humanism',[34] with the chief agitators being the Dominican theologians at the University of Cologne. Members of the Order certainly were active missionaries and willingly carried out anti-Jewish proselytising campaigns as travelling preachers, for the expulsion of Jews.[35] However, there is no evidence that there was a concentrated attempt by the monks to have Jews expelled from the Empire though they would have supported such a policy, as is evident from the Order's activities in the Spanish kingdom where they were very much involved in the expulsion of Jews in 1492.[36]

G. Kisch (1889–1985)[37] examines the dispute from a legalist point of view and reviews all of Reuchlin's legal sources in the *Augenspiegel*. He considers Reuchlin to be an erudite jurist and a defender of Jewish beliefs who derived his liberal views of Judaism from his analysis of the Justinian Civil Law. This legal codex, Kisch points out, granted the Jews specific rights of protection within the Roman Empire. With the development of humanism from Italy into the German speaking areas of the Empire the more enlightened codified Civil law was slowly replacing the dominance of Canon Law, and G. Kisch sees Reuchlin's publication as an effort to further a legal system based on universal principles.[38] Accordingly, the *Augenspiegel* is the work of a modernising legal humanist which became part of the debate between the more traditional scholastic schools of thought and enlightened humanism. In 1972, Karl K. Finke placed Reuchlin in the role of a liberal humanist lawyer[39] who applied his legal knowledge to preserve Hebrew literature. Thus Reuchlin's legal and classical studies were the sources of his liberal view of Jewish literature. Friedrich Lotter has analysed the text[40] and, based on the number of Biblical references and citations from the Church Fathers,

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[34] S.W. Baron: *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. 13 (1969), p. 189.

[35] See J.I. Israel: *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism 1515–1750*, p. 7.

[36] A scholarly account of the expulsion is given by Haim Beinart: *The Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*, *Transl.* by Jeffrey M. Green, (English ed. Oxford, 2002). For a detailed account of Jewish life and the relations between Christians, Muslims and Jews prior to their expulsion see Mark D. Meyerson: *A Jewish Renaissance in Fifteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, 2004).

[37] Guido Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin. Eine rechtsgeschichtlich-vergleichende Studie zum Toleranzproblem im 16. Jahrhundert* (Constance, 1961), pp. 23–36.

[38] G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 24.

[39] See S. Rhein: 'Reuchliniana I. Neue Bausteine zur Biographie Johannes Reuchlins', pp. 282–283, and note 27.

[40] Friedrich Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', in Arno Herzig, et al. (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden*, pp. 65–88, here p. 83.

he concludes that Reuchlin's legal arguments are secondary to his theological views.[41] M. Ackermann[42] supports the view that it is a legal document and points out that such citations were common in all legal documents at the time and cannot be taken as proof that it is a religious pamphlet. Judging by Reuchlin's writings, however, none of which are specifically on jurisprudence, legal science alone cannot be the motive for his publication. As a practised lawyer he applies his legal knowledge and introduces various legal sources to prove the validity of his arguments, but it cannot be denied that he copiously cites the Bible to support his views. Whether he did it to improve his legal case out of religious conviction, or simply used them as shrewd arguments to mollify his theological opponents, we can never know with certainty. However, in order to demonstrate that he was not acting as a professional lawyer on behalf of the Jewish community, he avoids any direct remark that would indicate he is arguing in their interest or that by confiscating their books they were done an injustice and therefore he felt obliged to defend their interests. Yet he leaves the reader to assume that it was an illegal act and that it should be rectified.

D. Price sees the main thrust of the dispute resulting from a combined anti-Jewish campaign by theologians at German universities, the Dominican and the Observant Franciscan clerical orders and Reuchlin's scholarly interest. Reuchlin was seen as the main obstacle to their campaigns and hence need to be silenced.[43]

In the view of H. Holborn, 'the question was not simply as to the retention of the Jewish books, but as to something much more fundamental. Should the humanists have a voice in the Church?'[44] He based this argument very much on the earlier interpretations of the significance of the 'Letters of Obscure Men' (*Epistolae obscurorum virorum*)[45] for Reformation history,

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[41] D. Price points out that F. Lotter may have overlooked Reuchlin's use of anti-Jewish material in his arguments. Reuchlin cites an number of the well-known medieval polemical authors and were inserted to show he was familar with the accusations made against Judaism but pointed out that these authors were not always knowlegeable of the material they wrote about and hence formed a wrong opinion. See D. Price: *The Campaign to destroy Jewish books*, p. 274 and note 77.

[42] Markus Rafael Ackermann: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die italienische Rechtswissenschaft', in Gerald Dörnier (ed.): *Reuchlin und Italien* (Stuttgart, 1999), p. 137.

[43] D. Price: *The Campaign to destroy Jewish books*, pp. 100–104; 230.

[44] Hajo Holborn: *Ulrich von Hutten and the German Reformation* (New York, 1965), p. 56. Cited by James H. Overfield: 'A new look at the Reuchlin affair', in: *Studies in Medieval Renaissance History*, 8 (1971), pp. 165–207, here p. 170.

[45] *Epistolae obscurorum virorum. The Latin Text with an English Rendering. Notes and Historical Introduction* by Francis Griffin Stokes (London, 1875), [2nd repr, London 1925]. A modern English translation is given in: E. Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 109–128.

which were deemed to be the result of the competing schools of philosophy, humanism and scholasticism at German universities. This has been successfully rejected meanwhile by J.H. Overfield, who states, 'the status of the Jews and their books was a more important issue than the status of humanism or scholasticism'.[46] He points out that the dispute was not between two directions in philosophy,[47] as some of the anti-Reuchlinists were also humanists, a point often overlooked in earlier publications. He concurs with the view that Reuchlin's enlightened attitude stemmed from his training as a lawyer[48] and that he took his 'strongest arguments against confiscation from Civil and Canon Law'.[49]

The debate on humanism cannot be ignored, however, as Reuchlin's Bible exegesis and his 'trilingualism' ranks him among the early German humanists. He was one of several German scholars that were greatly influenced by the Italian Renaissance movement, who brought to Germany a mode of thought which was in its infancy and was to have profound influence on the arts and sciences of Northern Europe. This is evident in Reuchlin's text in his regular citation of classical authors and languages. The *Augenspiegel*, though aimed at the general public, contains references to scholarly works which implies the reader is familiar with classical sources and in the application of Roman Civil Law. The use of original sources and his personal research into religious beliefs were all characteristics associated with the Renaissance movement in Italy.

H. Peterse,[50] examines the case against Reuchlin made by his chief adversary, the Chief Inquisitor Jakob Hoogstraeten (ca. 1465–1526),[51] and sees the anti-Jewish policy of Cologne's University theological faculty of which he was a leading figure, together with the then current intellectual debate on scholasticism and humanism as the major influences on the controversy.[52] The faculty strongly adhered to a fourteenth century Canon law definition of Jews as being *servi* (slaves) and to the Church's teaching *servitus Iudaeorum* (servitude of Jews). Hoogstraeten's efforts to establish the un-

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[46] J.H. Overfield: 'A new look at the Reuchlin affair', p. 171.

[47] Ibid., p. 180.

[48] Ibid., p. 175.

[49] Ibid., p. 176.

[50] Hans Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*: *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Antijudaismus im 16. Jahrhundert* (Mainz, 1995), pp. 1–7.

[51] Ibid., pp. 9–12 for biographical details of Hoogstraeten and notes on more recent research. See also P.G. Bietenholz & T.B. Deutscher (eds): *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 2, (Toronto, 1986), pp. 200–202.

[52] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 147.

orthodoxy of Reuchlin's beliefs ensured that the whole affair remained long in public debate due to the protracted length of the trial and the parallel debate in society on religious reform. H. Peterse also considers Reuchlin's mandate to examine the Jewish books to be directly related to the emperor's attempt to re-establish his authority over the Jews throughout the empire. The decline of the emperor's power and his consequent inability to protect the Jews from persecution led to their being driven out of German cities. Granted questions relating to Jewish fiscal matters were subject to imperial privilege[53] and hence the application of civil law would have given precedence over local princely ordinances. During the Emperor Maximilian's reign (1493–1519) the number of Jewish expulsions from German territories did increase, but there was no mass exodus. More often the expulsion took place as result of local agitation due to changed economic conditions but was not part of a directed policy.[54] They had long been granted the privilege to reside in some areas due to their usefulness as money lenders.[55] Frankfurt am Main and Worms[56] were imperial cities that granted the Jews the right of residency during Maximilian's lifetime. Frankfurt had one of the largest Jewish commuinities and this time and a school for advanced study.[57] The introduction of restrictions by royal decree on the repayment of interest on loans, however, meant the Jews lost their economic value to the towns and powerful princes. With the elimination of their status as brokers they were fair game to be expelled from the towns and territories and exposed to intense missionary campaigns. The number of Jews residing in the German speaking lands varied so often over time that any attempt to put numbers on them residing in a particular area is rather speculative due to the complex sellement patterns at this period.[58]

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[53] Reinhard Gilles: 'Steuerwesen', in: *1495-Kaiser, Reich, Reformen*: *Der Reichstag zu Worms* (Koblenz, 1995), pp. 375–381. (Katalog zur Ausstellung). Eberhard Isenmann: *Die deutsche Stadt im Spätmittelalter*: *1250–1500*; *Stadtgestalt, Recht, Stadtregiment, Kirche, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft* (Stuttgart, 1988), p. 100.

[54] See Michael Toch: '"Umb Gemeyns Nutz und Notdurft Willen". Obrigkeitliches und jurisdiktionelles Denken bei der Austreibung der Nürnberger Juden 1498/99', in idem: *Peasants and Jews in Medieval Germany*: *Studies in Cultural, Social, and Economic History* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 1–89.

[55] C. Scott Dixon: *The Reformation and Rural Society* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 144.

[56] See A. Herzig: 'Die Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit Reuchlins', pp. 11–20.

[57] Ellen Martin: *Die deutschen Schriften des Johannes Pfefferkorn. Zum Problem des Judenhasses und der Intoleranz in der Zeit der Vorreformation* (Göppingen, 1994), (*Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik*, Nr. 604), p. 140 and n. 518.

[58] See here Dean Philip Bell, 'Jewish settlement, politics and Reformation', in: Dean Philip

The emperor would not have chosen Jewish affairs as an area in which to try to reinforce his authority, especially at a time when they were being expelled from many areas of Europe and would have brought him no great political advantage.

Any attempt to provide a non-Christian religious minority with greater protection contrary to local resistance would have been viewed as anti-Christian and thus be strongly opposed. It would have led to a contrary effect and hence to a greater weakening of imperial power. None of Reuchlin's correspondence indicates that he wished to support imperial designs in relation to Jewish affairs. All these historians tend to base their opinions very much on Reuchlin's professional life and his academic interests, but ignored his views on religion. It is in his beliefs, however, that most evidence for his views in pamphlet is to be found.

The first major attempt to examine these in relation to the *Augenspiegel* was made by H. Oberman.[59] He sees Reuchlin's aim in his publication to be the unrestricted access to the mysticism of the Jewish Cabbala. Reuchlin perceived this teaching to be a transmitted esoteric philosophy, designed to reveal to the initiated the mysteries concealed in the Old Testament. Prior to the study of Hebrew by Christians, only Jewish savants had access to this central source. For Reuchlin, therefore, Hebrew religious literature was imperative to understand the method used to decipher God's Revelation hidden in and behind the letters of the Old Testament. If Christians could master the intricate method of the Cabbala, then it would benefit not only Christian Cabbalists, but could also be used to convert Jews to Christianity. H. Oberman regards Reuchlin's tolerance of Jews as limited insofar as if they refused to convert they should be expelled from the Empire. The pamphlet undoubtedly shows clear evidence of Reuchlin's religious views, but there is no certainty that it was to be used for conversion purposes. In the text he criticises the clergy for their lack of Hebrew knowledge[60] and

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Bell & Stephen G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, (Leiden, 2006), (*Studies in central European histories*, vol. 37), pp. 421–450, here p. 426.

[59] Heiko A. Oberman: *Wurzeln des Antisemitismus. Christenangst und Judenplage im Zeitalter von Humanismus und Reformation* (Berlin, 1981), pp. 30–39, here p. 33.

[60] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio ($C^r = V^r$). P. Biller, and A. Hudson (eds.): *Heresy and Literacy 1000–1530*, p. 6. Also the article by John H. Arnold: '"A Man Takes an Ox by the Horn and a Peasant by the Tongue"', 'Literacy, Orality and Inquisition in Medieval Languedoc', in Sarah Rees Jones (ed.): *Learning and Literacy in Medieval England and Abroad* (Turnhout, 2003), pp. 31–47, here p. 38. On anti-clericalism in pre-Reformation Germany see Geoffrey Dickens: 'Intellectual and social forces in the German reformation', in J.W. Mommsen, P. Alter,

suggests if they were better educated they might be more successful in their conversion campaigns. Thus he accepts that such campaigns exist or should be implemented, but does not actively encourage them. He provides too many legal citations for their protection and hence it would be of little use for such a purpose. The level of education of the regular clergy had been the object of ridicule and criticism since the early part of the fifteenth century, and demands for reform were widespread among both lay and clerical humanists. Hoogstraeten had criticised the clergy for spending more time in alehouses than in pastoral work. In recent studies it appears the criticism of clerics was often exaggerated and resulted more from the Church's loss of its monopoly in the administration of schools with consequent changes in the curriculum. The rising standard of learning amongst city dwellers resulted in demands for more discernible sermons from their local clergy. The increasing need for skilled and well educated clerics became clear to the ecclesiastical authorities in the thirteenth century in their missionary debates with the Cathars, some of whom were educated at the University of Paris. Nevertheless, Reuchlin's criticism that clerics who were unable to read Hebrew could not seriously study the Bible was a valid criticism. The numbers of clerics able to read Hebrew at the time of his publication were quite few.

W. Trusen[61] also sees a religious motive in Reuchlin's publication, but considers his real aim to be the rescue of the Hebrew language for the study of the Bible, and similar to H. Oberman considers its acquisition as an aid to converting Jews.[62] The Bible could not be correctly interpreted without knowledge of Hebrew and therefore the Jews as conservers of this written and oral language should be permitted to continue residing in the German lands to enable Christians to benefit from their knowledge. The preservation of their language was also necessary to read and understand the Cabbala,

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and R. Scribner (eds.): *The Urban Classes, the Nobility and the Reformation* (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 11–18. F. Machilek: 'Schulen und gelehrte Bildung', in Gerhard Bott (ed.): *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland* (Nuremberg, 1983), pp. 89–115. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 321–322; 370–435. Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica: Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*. (Amsterdam, 2005), pp. 71–72. (*Catalogue of an exhibition in the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica commemorating Johann Reuchlin* (1455–1522)). A detailed analysis of the educational levels and incomes from prebends of a city's clergy prior to the Reformation are listed in Gottfried Geiger: *Die Reichsstadt Ulm vor der Reformation: Städtisches und kirchliches Leben am Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1971), pp. 105–148. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 18.

[61] W. Trusen: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die Fakultäten', pp. 115–157.

[62] Ibid., p. 156.

a knowledge of which would provide Christians with a better insight into Jewish religious beliefs and place them in a stronger position to convert the Jews to Christianity. Reuchlin rejects coercive conversion because of its futility and therefore uses the decrees of Pope Gregory I (564–604), who opposed forceful conversions, to support his own views.[63]

Whether Reuchlin believed he could convert Jews by using Hebrew or by debating from the Cabbala, is a matter of conjecture and will require in depth research before a definite answer can be given. I have failed to find any evidence of this intention and consider him too well read to entertain such an idea. If such a policy was introduced by the ecclesiastical authorities he probably would have accepted it, provided it had a valid legal basis. However, it is unlikely that Reuchlin would have become involved himself in a trial before an inquisitorial court on a charge of heresy[64] if the aim of his scholarly interest in Hebrew and the Cabbala was to use his knowledge to convert Jews. In his defence against the charges of holding un-orthodox views on Christianity before the Inquisition tribunal, he made no reference to the conversion of Jews as the purpose of his publication.

Both L. Geiger and H. Graetz however overlook his statement in the *Augenspiegel* text where Reuchlin clearly considers the Talmud to be in error, and saw its continued existence mainly as a source which Christians could use in their missionary campaigns.[65] Reuchlin was as ambiguous as many of his contemporary Renaissance scholars, as is evident in parts of the *Augenspiegel*[66] where his view of Judaism differed little from his contemporaries. Like all intellectuals of his day he posed questions of the society to which they belonged, but was not remote from its cultural beliefs. He was prepared to defend and protect Jewish writings, but at the same time saw Judaism as a threat to the Christian faith in an age of great uncertainty. Nevertheless, he does plead for the preservation of the Talmud seeing its use as means of furthering philosophical debate between Christians and Jews on its contents. His views of Judaism are not easy to discern and seem to have changed over time as he became more knowledgeable of Hebrew but he clearly was willing to debate it unlike many scholars of his day.

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[63] Ibid., p. 133.

[64] L. Geiger provides a detailed account of the trial in Mainz, Speyer and Rome. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 290–321, and also H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 29–34.

[65] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Biiij^{v} = IIII^{v}).

[66] Ibid., folio (Biiij^{r} = IIII^{r}) for an example of his criticism of Jewish writers of the Talmud.

Trusen also maintains that Reuchlin's use of derogatory language exacerbated the dispute and that he should have been aware it would have serious consequences. It is not the form of expression expected of an academic. However, in a period where scurrilous and obscene language was common[67] in the vernacular it is unlikely that contemporary readers or listeners would have considered his text as particularly unacceptable, or in conflict with codes of language commonly used not only among the unlearned, but also among academics. Reuchlin's form of expression cannot be judged by present day standards or the rules of social behaviour in the twenty-first century, as these are far removed from those of his day.

[67] On the form of insults and language used in towns and villages in the Late Middle Ages, see M. Toch: 'Schimpfwörter im Dorf des Spätmittelalters', in idem: *Peasants and Jews in Medieval Germany*, pp. 311–327. P.G. Bietenholz & T.B. Deutscher (eds): *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 3, pp. 145–150. Edith Wenzel, 'Jews and judaism in sixteenth-century German literature', in: D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 393–417, here p. 401.

CHAPTER TWO

REUCHLIN AND HIS STUDY OF THE LAW

This leads to the involuntary question as to who was this single minded author of a pamphlet strangely entitled *Augenspiegel*, which seems to fascinate and frustrate readers over the centuries.

Some personal factors that moulded his personality may provide an insight to the author's way of thinking. He was born on 29th January 1455 in Pforzheim, a town in the South-West of Germany then under the jurisdiction of the Margrave of Baden. His father was an administrator at a Dominican monastery, and thus from an early age he was aware of the learning and scholarship of this religious Order. He attended the local renowned Pforzheim Latin School among whose alumni later was the well-known scholar of the Reformation and Reuchlin's relative, Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560).[1] In summer 1470 he registered as a student at the University of Freiburg in Breisgau where he followed a course typical for the period. Students were obliged to pursue a first course in arts subjects before proceeding to the so called higher subjects of study such as law or medicine. As a registered student in Freiburg he was obliged to pay fees, swear an oath to respect all the University statutes and to remain loyal to the House of Austria, the city being part of the Habsburg territory since 1368. In return he obtained the privileged status of a university student with civilian rights. There is, however, no record that he graduated from the University or of how long he remained there.

His ability in Latin was recognized from his school days and it provided him with an opportunity to accompany a fellow student, the son of the

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[1] Reuchlin was related by the marriage of his sister to one of Melanchthon's cousins. He resided in her house while attending the local Latin school in Pforzheim. The complete family relationship with Melanchthon is not fully documented but there is no doubt Reuchlin was involved in Melanchthon's education which would suggest close family ties and he was to help him at later date to obtain a position as lecturer for Hebrew in Wittenberg. Terms used to describe family relationships in historical literature were not fixed hence designations as "cousin" or "nephew" do not signify the same level of familiarty as we may assume today. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, *Letter 257*, Eobanus Hessus to Reuchlin, pp. 144–154, here p. 152, and note 33. See Heinz Scheible, 'Reuchlins Einfluss auf Melanchthon', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 123–149. See also, D. Price: *The Campaign to destroy Jewish books*, p. 19.

Margrave Karl I of Baden, to Paris where he was first introduced to the study of the Greek language[2] by his fellow countryman and teacher Johannes Heynlin (1430–1496). His friendship with Heynlin enabled him later to acquire later several printed editions of Greek classical texts[3] and their relationship was to have a decisive influence on his future intellectual studies. He heard the lectures on philosophy and theology given by Heynlin[4] while studying at Paris. Heynlin, who later became a Cartusian monk at Basle and though steeped in scholastic tradition, was open to the new direction in studies taken by reformers, and later known as humanism. These two schools of thought were to divide universities throughout the Renaissance period into those who followed a more progressive and rational way of interpreting texts using critical analysis (*via moderna*), and those who wished to continue with a scholastic mode of thought based on tradition (*via antiqua*).[5] Reuchlin acquired a printed edition of this work from his fellow countryman and Latin teacher Johannes Heynlin von Stein, while studying in Paris. The first published edition appeared under Heynlin's guidance at Paris in 1471. He also came under the influence of another scholar, Rudolf Agricola (1444–1485), who caused him to write his first academic text-a redaction of a Greek and Latin lexicon entitled *Vocabularius breviloquus* (1478).[6] This work is a clear indication of his superior intellectual ability and of his methodical and scientific approach to the study of sources. It was completed during his studies and it was in such demand that it appeared in twenty-five editions. It was the first serious attempt to provide a dictionary based on classical writers with the root of the word cited from the source, which very often were Roman legal text books. At this stage he had not completed any legal studies nor are there any indications that he proposed to

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[2] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 14.

[3] See here Martin Sicherl, 'Neue Reuchliniana Johannes Reuchlin als Begründer des Griechischen in Deutschland', in Hans Eideneier (ed.): *Graeca recentiora in Germania*: *deutsch-griechische Kulturbeziehungen vom 15. bis. 19 Jahrhundert* (Wolfenbütteler Forschung 59), (Wiesbaden, 1994), pp. 65–92.

[4] See Hans Rupprich, 'Johannes Reuchlin und seine Bedeutung im europäischen Humanismus', in M. Krebs, and H. Kling (eds.): *Johannes Reuchlin* (1455–1522). *Festgabe seiner Vaterstadt Pforzheim zur 500. Wiederkehr seines Geburtstages*, pp. 10–34.

[5] See Rudolf Kettemann, 'Peter Luder (um 1415–1472): Die Anfänge der humanistischen Studien in Deutschland', in Paul Gerhard Schmidt (ed.): *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten*: *Biographische Profile*, pp. 13–34.

[6] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 68–76. Markus Rafael Ackermann: *Der Jurist Johannes Reuchlin* (*1455–1522*) (Berlin, 1999), pp. 200–222.

in the future. Thus his use of Roman legal texts as a source for his dictionary indicates the depth and the extent he undertook to substantiate his entries.

Supplementary study took him to Basle University, which at the time offered both methods of philosophical study, *via moderna*, and *via antiqua*, in the courses taught there. Reuchlin completed his baccalaureate in arts based on the *via moderna* method. Additional study enabled him to graduate with a Magister Artium in 1477. He also received further instruction in Greek and established contact with Johann Amerbach (1440–1513)[7] who was later to print his *Vocabularius breviloquus* and a number of his other works.[8] During his studies he became friends with fellow humanist and author Sebastian Brant (1457–1521) and was to remain on friendship terms with him to the end of Brant's life.[9]

In 1478 he is again in Paris to continue his Greek studies. However, it was not in languages, in spite of their importance to him, but in law that he was to continue his professional studies. This brought him to Orleans and Poitiers, from 1478 to 1481, to two of the most renowned universities in France at this period. It is significant that he decided to study law outside the German lands, where the study of jurisprudence was mainly confined to Canon Law. He, however, wished to study Civil Law (Roman law) which was taught mainly in Italy and France since the twelfth century.[10] At the University of Orleans he studied courses in Canon and Civil law and these enabled him to fulfil the degree requirements for legal studies. Students of Civil Law studied mainly the *Digests* of Justinian. These are a collection of early Roman legal textbooks, roughly 50 in number, and are the major part of the *Corpus iuris civilis*.[11] The second part is a collection of Roman ordinances edited in the sixth century by Tribonian. These two codices were

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[7] For biographical details of Amerbach see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 136*, Reuchlin to Johannes Amerbach, pp. 415–418, here p. 417, and note 2. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 140*, Reuchlin to Johannes Amerbach, pp. 58–60, here p. 59, and note 6. For an English description see, Peter. G. Bietenholz & Thomas B. Deutscher (eds): *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 1 (Toronto, 1985), pp. 46–47.

[8] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 15.

[9] He was one of the editors who carried out emendations of Reuchlin's major Cabbalistic work *De verbo mirifico* (1494) some years later. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 64*, Reuchlin to Johannes von Dalberg, here p. 202, and note 6, and *Letter 77*, Sebastian Brant to Reuchlin, pp. 242–245, here p. 244, and note 7.

[10] See Steven Rowan: *Ulrich Zasius*: *A Jurist in the German Renaissance*, *1461–1535* (Frankfurt am Main, 1987), pp. 1–13.

[11] See the entry for '*Corpus iuris civilis*' in: *LMA*, vol. 3 (1986), cols. 270–277.

incorporated into the Code of Civil law and were Reuchlin's main sources for his legal judgements.[12] Additional legal studies followed in Poitiers where he graduated in 1481 with a licentiate in Civil Laws and with the authority to obtain a doctorate at a university of his choice.

He returned to his native country and obtained an appointment as personal advisor to Count Eberhard im Bart of Württemberg (1445–1496).[13] At the same time he continued his legal studies and entered as a candidate for a doctorate in law at the University of Tübingen. The following year 1483 he went on the first of his visits to Italy as one of the group of advisors who accompanied the Count. He appeared before Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484)[14] in his capacity as Count Eberhard's Latin interpreter and his legal negotiator concerning Tübingen University which had been founded in 1477 by Count Eberhard to provide qualified staff for his court.[15] Pope Sixtus IV presented the Count with the 'Golden Rose'.[16] This token is given each year on Laetare Sunday to those considered by the Pope to have earned the honour through their service for the Church. The granting of such a symbol to Eberhard indicated he was a person whom the Pope could rely on for his loyalty. Thus Reuchlin in his role as private secretary was known for his scholarly ability at a very early stage to the most powerful person in the Church. While in Italy they were also introduced to Lorenzo de Medici (1449–1492), father of the future Pope Leo X (1513–1521), and to several other scholars, among them Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) and probably to Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) at the Florentine Academy.[17]

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[12] See the entry for 'Digesten' in: *LThK*, vol. 3, col. 389.

[13] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 23. Gerhard Faix: *Eberhard im Bart. Der erste Herzog von Württemberg* (Stuttgart, 1990), provides details on the life of Count (later Duke) Eberhard im Bart, but there is no reference to his relationship with J. Reuchlin.

[14] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 25.

[15] See Volker Press, 'Eberhard im Bart von Würrtemberg als Graf und Fürst des Reiches' in Hans-Martin Maurer (ed.) *Eberhard und Mechthild*: *Untersuchungen zu Politik und Kultur im ausgehenden Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1994) pp. 9–34.

[16] Joachim Fischer et al.: *Das Haus Württemberg*, pp. 7–33, here pp. 24–27. See also the entry for 'Goldene Rose' in: *LThK*, vol. 4, col. 1041.

[17] The Academy appears to have been a house where students were admitted for short periods of time. They heard lectures and discourses on philosophical issues given by various visiting academics. See James Hankins: 'The Myth of the Platonic Academy of Florence', in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44 (1991), pp. 429–475. R. Weis: 'Learning and education in Western Europe 1470–1520', in G.R. Potter (ed.): *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 1: *The Renaissance 1493–1520* (Cambridge, 1957), pp. 96–126. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 34.

The need for qualified professionals in areas such as medicine and law had become apparent meanwhile to rulers and administrators of the Church during this period of change in society.[18] It also was one of the effects of the spread of humanism which brought more non-clerics into university courses of study. The increased requirements of the imperial chancery in governing a vast territorial empire which involved settling territorial disputes with princes and recalcitrant vassals necessitated skilled practitioners of the law. Church courts had preceded civil courts in their adoption of written procedures and thus clerics with degrees in Canon Law dominated jurisprudence prior to lay people entering university courses of Civil Law.[19] These qualified church lawyers were formidable opponents in all matters concerning church legal rights. Litigants in civil courts, however, were very often involved in cases where the legal procedures and rulings did not have universal application as they were based on communal law. Princes and the educated elite throughout the empire increasingly required a predictable and stable form of law not only in their own locality, but also in the other regions of the empire, that would ensure personal security and permanency of legal decisions. Professional lawyers trained in a codified civil law (Roman law) were required for the administration of territorial estates, and to provide professional legal advice in towns and cities. The position of a trained lawyer brought with it greater social mobility. At the courts of reigning nobles they were given a status equal to that of the hereditary nobility.[20] Their knowledge of law in such areas as probate, property and contract law and their experience in disputing made them particularly useful as negotiators and diplomats.

In 1485 Reuchlin completed his legal studies and graduated from Tübingen University with the title of 'doctor of imperial laws'. His qualifications and his position at Count Eberhard im Bart's court, on a salary of fifty gulden, provided him with the precondition and the societal status to pursue a career in the legal world of the civic authorities. In the same year he was appointed associate judge to one of the appellate courts of justice in Württemberg, and from 1501–1509 he held a position as one of the judges at the Imperial Chamber Court at Speyer. He was also appointed as one of the three judges of the Swabian League in 1502 where he remained until he

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[18] See Paul Gerhard Schmidt 'Einführung' in idem: *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten: Biographische Profile*, pp. 9–12, here p. 10. Also S. Rhein, 'Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522): Ein deutscher "uomo universale"', p. 63.

[19] S. Rowan: *Ulrich Zasius*, p. 7.

[20] M.R. Ackermann: *Der Jurist Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 43.

resigned in 1513.[21] This legal body was established to settle internal disruption between territorial princes, imperial cities and the landed nobility. It was while working as a judge that the *Augenspiegel* was written.[22] This position provided him with a source of income of 90 to a 100 florin per year, as the judges were paid for each sitting of the court. It also enabled him to marry into a relatively wealthy family in 1485. His first wife was the daughter of a judge with considerable property rights and mills in the Swabian village of Ditzingen.[23]

A part of Reuchlin's duties for the count involved diplomatic representation and providing reports of his diplomatic missions.[24] He was sent to attend a meeting of Princes of the Realm at Frankfurt where Maximilian I, the future emperor, was crowned king in 1486. Thus Reuchlin was known to him from an early stage of his career. During Reuchlin's trial in 1514 Maximilian wrote to the Pope on his behalf asking that 'this innocent man' be left in peace for the remainder of his life.[25] There he was to make his first acquaintance with the Bishop of Worms, Johannes von Dalberg (1455–1503), a humanist scholar and patron of the arts.[26] He also attended the larger meeting of the princes at the Diet of Worms (1495). This forum lasted six months and became one the most important vehicles for the reform of the Holy Roman Empire in the late Middle Ages. One of the reforms particularly impinged upon his professional life.

The members of the Diet agreed, with many reservations and though hardly devoid of political influence,[27] to the establishment of a supreme

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[21] Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 123*, Reuchlin to Duke Albrecht IV of Bavaria, pp. 386–387, here p. 387, notes 3, and 6.

[22] S. Rhein: 'Reuchliniana I. Neue Bausteine zur Biographie Johannes Reuchlins', pp. 277–284, here especially p. 282. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 1–58.

[23] Hansmartin Decker-Hauff: 'Bausteine zur Reuchlin-Biographie', pp. 83–107.

[24] Joachim Fischer, Peter Amelung und Wolfgang Irtenkauf: 'Kultur und Bildung', in *Württemberg im Spatmittelalter*, pp. 129–187, here p. 170.

[25] Hermann Wiesflecker: *Kaiser Maximilian 1. Das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*, vol. 5 (Munich, 1986), p. 353, looks at the Reuchlin affair, but it is not very detailed.

[26] The only substantial biographical work on Johann von Dalberg is by Karl Morneweg: *Johann von Dalberg, ein deutscher Humanist und Bischof* (Heidelberg, 1887). This is rather dated, but there are no modern studies. See the article on Dalberg by Peter Walter: 'Johannes von Dalberg und der Humanismus', in: *1495-Kaiser, Reich, Reformen: Der Reichstag zu Worms* (Koblenz, 1995), pp. 139–171. L. Geiger provides some details on Reuchlin's relations with Dalberg, but here, too, a more up to date study is necessary to take into account the results of recent research. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 41–45.

[27] See Peter Schmid: 'Die Reformbeschlüsse von 1495 und ihre politischen Rahmenbedingungen', in Bernhard Diestelkamp (ed.): *Das Reichskammergericht: Der Weg zu seiner Gründung und die ersten Jahrzehnte seines Wirkens* (*1451–1527*), (Cologne, 2003), pp. 117–144.

court of appeals, the Imperial Chamber Court (*Reichskammergericht*). It was stipulated that half the number of designated assessors should be competent in Civil Law, thus it encouraged the development of professional legalists. The lack of a centralised legal authority and the complex rivalry for political power prior to its foundation had led to widespread abuses in the application of law within the Empire. The king's authority was ineffective, and princes exempted themselves from citation before the courts or resorted to private courts of appeal.[28] Local privileges granted could be ignored or denied, very often under the pretext of not being in the interest of public peace.[29] The Imperial Chamber Court aimed to replace these practices with a more equitable form of justice and with common legal standards. The court was required to implement all imperial ordinances throughout the empire, and thus was the beginning of a standardised legal system for the Holy Roman Empire.

The two main codes of law in use in the Holy Roman Empire at this period were the *Sachsenspiegel*,[30] compiled by Eike von Repgow (1180–1233), and the *Schwabenspiegel*,[31] which was partially based on the *Sachsenspiegel*, and compiled by members of a religious Order in Augsburg. These standard legal textbooks recorded the legal principles to apply in litigation. One of the most widely distributed legal texts in the territory of Swabia, where Reuchlin lived and worked, was entitled *Der richterlich clagspiegel*. Originally this was written by an unknown Swabian author but was greatly publicised by Reuchlin's friend, the jurist, scholar, and humanist, Sebastian Brant. The book had appeared in several editions since its initial publication in 1460. It was designed to be a guide for legalists to the principles and application of Roman civil and criminal codes of law. The numerous and various legal codes used reflect the diverse legal systems then extant in the Empire and the weakness of the imperial power to implement a unified form of jurisprudence.[32] The codes defined legal status according to social groups,

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[28] T. Scott: 'Germany and the Empire', p. 354.

[29] S. Rowan: *Ulrich Zasius*, p. 6.

[30] See the entry for 'Gemeines Recht' in Adalbert Erler (ed.): *Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1971), cols. 1506–1510. Peter Johanek: 'Eike von Repgow, Hoyer von Falkenstein und die Entstehung des Sachsenspiegels', in: Festschrift für Heinz Stoob zum 65. Geburtstag, in Helmut Jäger (ed.): *Civitatum communitas*, vol. 2 (Cologne, 1984), pp. 716–755.

[31] See the entry for 'Schwabenspiegel' in Adalbert Erler (ed.): *Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*, vol. 4 (Berlin, 1990), cols. 1547–1551.

[32] Jost Hausmann, 'Gerichtsbarkeit', in: *1495-Kaiser, Reich, Reformen*: *Der Reichstag zu Worms*, pp. 353–373.

but in their compilation they were influenced as much by theological considerations as they were by legal principles, and thus discriminated against Jews for their non-Christian faith. The German codes did not clearly define the status of Jews as slaves of the realm,[33] but lawyers in the practice of the law very often interpreted the codes to confirm the Church's definition.

Reuchlin, as a professional lawyer, who derived his legal principles from Civil Law would have welcomed the establishment of the *Reichskammergericht*, but not for political reasons or to promote imperial ambitions. In his professional capacity, he was daily confronted with cases that were very often based on legislation contained in communal and Canon Law, and whose principles were in conflict with those of the Civil Code. Litigation concerning Jewish rights was a particular area of conflict.

The Early Christian Church had adopted the Roman legal status of the Jews as a subjected nation, but granted them the right to freely practise their religion.[34] It forbade proselytism by Jews, but also any form of forced baptism by Christians. Pope Gregory I codified this Church policy in a papal letter. Its intention was to regulate relations between Jews and Christians for subsequent generations and to ensure that Jews were always humanely treated. This policy was strictly adhered to until the early Middle Ages. It was ended when the Jews became the object of political tension between the Church and the Empire. A Canon law promulgated by Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) propounded the teaching of 'the servitude of the Jews' (*servitus Iudaeorum*). This definition was based on a school of Bible exegesis that the Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus of Nazareth and thus they were subservient to the Church in their religion.[35] It was incorporated into Canon Law and became actively applied in questions of religious interaction with Jews. Pope Gregory IX (1227–1241) and Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254) reaffirmed their status, but added they were subservient not only to the Church but to all Christians. The status of Jews within the Holy Roman Empire[36] had long been debated with competing claims by the emperor and the Church as to who had priority rights over Jewish

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[33] G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 10.

[34] See the entry for 'Rechtslage der Juden' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 1164–1165. J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, pp. 60–74. Desiree Hirst: *Hidden Riches* (London, 1964), pp. 15–18.

[35] Guido Kisch: *Forschungen zur Rechts- und Sozialgeschichte der Juden in Deutschland während des Mittelalters nebst Bibliographien* (Sigmaringen, 1978), pp. 62–72. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 9. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 1–7.

[36] F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 69. Wilhelm Güde: *Die rechtliche Stellung der Juden in den Schriften deutscher Juristen*

affairs. The Emperor Frederick II (1212–1250)[37] declared their status to be 'slaves of the imperial chamber' (*servi camerae imperialis*).[38] He rejected as invalid the prior claim of the Church. Thus within the Empire the Jews were subject to conflicting legislation. Based on this legal premise, territorial nobles claimed they were therefore free to legislate for Jews as they wished, or to impose whatever demands on them they thought necessary, including those which were an expression of their independence from imperial legislation. This could cause Jews to be taxed by contending claimants or to be expelled by territorial princes contrary to imperial demands.

Reuchlin counters these by stating that within the Holy Roman Empire Jews are subject to Roman imperial code which had validity throughout the Empire. This was not the reality, but Reuchlin chose to ignore this fact to pursue his aim. He applies the civil code to grant Jews the legal status of 'cives' that is citizens with prescriptive rights. According to this ordinance, the Jews acquired equality in matters pertaining to their interactions with Christians, but it outlawed any Jewish religious behaviour that might influence Christian beliefs. He emphasises that his defence is derived from the highest legal authority that defines the position of the Jews in society in applying Civil Law as the basis of his arguments. Thus he adopts a contrary view to that given in the more restrictive and commonly applied Canon Law Codex and to the general practice of the Church authorities. Thomas Aquinas had declared in his work *Summa theologiae* that the Church was free to dispose of Jewish property as it thought fit.[39] M.R. Cohen interprets the Church's attitude and the relevant Canon Law Codes relating to Judaism as designed to marginalize the community.[40] They were already excluded from many public offices but they could also be excluded from the benefit of the law.

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des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts (Sigmaringen, 1981), pp. 54–55. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 4–14; 25–26. Michael Maas: *Readings in Late Antiquity* (London, 2000), p. 197. R. Po-chia Hsia: *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, p. 119.

37 Hans-Jörg Gilomen: 'Städtische Sondergruppen im Bürgerrecht', in Rainer Christoph Schwinges (ed.): *Neubürger im späten Mittelalter* (Berlin, 2002), pp. 125–154, here p. 138. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 110, and note 90.

38 R. Po-chia Hsia: *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, pp. 1–14.

39 H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 108–112. Alexander Broadie: 'Medieval Jewry through the Eyes of Aquinas', in Gérard Verbeke, and D. Verhelst (eds.): *Aquinas and Problems of His Time* (Louvain, 1976), pp. 57–68. On the legal status of the Jews in Canon Law see G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 17. On their legal status as Roman citizens see Amnon Linder: *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation. Introduction, Transl., and Commentary* (Detroit, 1987), pp. 118–119.

40 Mark R. Cohen: *Under Crescent and Cross* (Princeton, 1994), p. 10.

Reuchlin wished to foster toleration of various religions and not to exclude them from society. Christians had no authority to pass judgement on the beliefs of Jews, as they were not part of the Church. According to his interpretation of the law, Jews were free to practise their religion and should not be proscribed in any form that affected their religion.

He makes a clear distinction between Civil (*leges*) and Canon Law (*canones*)[41] as is evidenced by his use of the term 'sects' in the *Augenspiegel*.[42] He gives it a secularised legal interpretation, to indicate an accepted philosophy or way of life, and applicable to all religions. This division of jurisprudence into two legal sciences was uncommon and original, for at university both courses were considered an integral part of each other. Reuchlin's distinction indicates he favoured a secularisation of monarchical society. Thus he is indicative of those early humanist reformists who took an advanced view of their society and wished to introduce changes, which were to culminate in Luther's reformation movement some twenty years later.

He is, however, very selective in his citations and chooses those which support his arguments. The legal sources were not as benevolent towards Jews as he likes to present them. The relevant Canon Law says quite clearly that the Jews are subject to the Church authorities in all religious matters until eternity. It did grant them protection from arbitrariness, but Canon Law took precedence over any Jewish rites or traditions and confirmed Jewish servility. Reuchlin clearly interprets the Civil Law Code to treat Jews according to the accepted principles of justice despite his personal opposition to their beliefs. In the *Augenspiegel* he states that he reviewed the question of the Jewish books 'von rechts wegen'[43] i.e. on the question of its legality and cites both Canon and Civil Law.[44] His ability as a professional lawyer is evident by the legal principles that he cites, but especially his statement: 'The Jews, as subjects of the Holy Roman Empire should be treated according to Imperial Laws'[45] which was derived from the classical code of law, the Justinian collection of Civil Laws (*Corpus iuris civilis*).[46] He

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[41] See J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Bij^{r} = II^{r}).

[42] Ibid., folio (Biij^{r} = III^{r}). On the definition of the word 'sect' in the sixteenth century and Reuchlin's use see: G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 26, and note 9.

[43] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (B^{v} =I^{v}).

[44] G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 32–35.

[45] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Bij^{r} = II^{r}).

[46] A. Linder: *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, p. 197. See also the entry for 'Corpus iuris civilis' in: *LMA*, vol. 3 (Munich, 1986), cols. 270–277.

also cites Canon Law, particularly the *Decret*,[47] to support his arguments. The *Decret*[48] is a three-volume collection of patristic texts, council decrees and papal pronouncements compiled in the twelfth century by an Italian monk named Gratian. It was widely considered the authoritative collection of decrees on ecclesiastical affairs and was consulted and applied throughout the Holy Roman Empire. It later became integrated into the official code of Canon Law, and together with the *Corpus iuris civilis* became the universally accepted legal codes. Reuchlin bases his definition of the term 'cives', however, on the Justinian code which granted Jews equality in civil affairs. His theological beliefs and his legal training led him to reject the Church's decrees which declared Jews to be slaves of Christian princes. He applies Roman imperial law to show that they had equal status with Christians and points out that even Canon Law does not define them as 'enemies' though they are considered enemies in religion.[49]

In a pamphlet Reuchlin published some years earlier he had already set out some of his views that he held on Jews. It was entitled '*Doctor iohanns Reuchlins tütsch missiue. warumb die Juden so lang im ellend*[50] *sind* (Pforzheim, 1505),[51] and was probably intended as a general address and an appeal to the nobility on their obligations to the Jews resident in their territories, who wished to convert to Christianity, to provide them with encouragement and material support. In it he cited some of the same legal arguments he later used in the *Augenspiegel* but he also sets out the reasons why they have not converted and criticises some Jewish prayers for being anti-Christian but in the *Augenspiegel* refrains from this specific assertion which led to him being accused of supporting Judaism. In the *Augenspiegel* he indicates he is aware that some of the Jewish prayers could be polemically interpreted as attacks on Christian beliefs, yet he refused to support these charges made against Jews.[52] *Tütsch missiue* does however convey a

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[47] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Bij^{r} = II^{r}).

[48] See Friedrich Merzbacher: '*Corpus iuris canonici*', in Adalbert Erler, and Albrecht Cordes (eds.): *Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1971–), vol. 1, cols. 637–640.

[49] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (C^{v} = V^{v}).

[50] For the translation of 'ellend' meaning 'exile', see the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 3, cols. 406–411. Also G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 72 and n. 4.

[51] See, *Doctor iohanns Reuchlins/tütsch missiue, warumb die Juden/so lang im ellend sind*. [Thomas Anshelm, Pforzheim, 1505]. Doctor Johannes Reuchlin's German Epistle. Why the Jews have been in exile for so long. My translation of the title. A transcription of the entire text, with references to the citations is in *Johannes Reuchlin: Sämtliche Werke* edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al. (Stuttgart- Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 4–12.

[52] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (C^{r} = V^{r}). L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 206–207.

view that he favoures active misssionary campaigns against Judaism[53] and it became instrumental in his involvement in the campaign to destroy Jewish books some five years later. Though its publication he became known as someone who would seem to favour such a campaign and whose support could be enlisted.

Guido Kisch analysed the text[54] of *Tütsch missiue* for its legal citations, to contrast Reuchlin's legal view with that of another sixteenth-century legalist, Ulrich Zasius (1461–1535),[55] on the question of coerced baptism of Jews. In 1508 Zasius published a text on the legality of the baptism of Jewish children without their parents' consent.[56]He argued, with several citations from Christian authors, that Canon Law confirmed the Christian's right and duty to lead Jews away from their beliefs, and it was legal to carry out baptisms in opposition to the parents' wishes.

Reuchlin took a contrary position, as he clearly states in the *Augenspiegel*.[57] He based his argument on his exegesis of the Biblical passage (1Thess. 4, 12), where St Paul states, the religion of others is not a matter for Christians, and he interprets this to mean Christians had no authority to baptise those of other religions or to strive to do so. Reuchlin interprets the legal sources to mean that the adoption of Christianity must be based on free will, whereas Zasius is shown to be firmly convinced that forced conversions were legal and necessary, according to his interpretation of the relevant Canon codes.

According to Reuchlin's interpretation of the law, the Jews possessed certain economic and civil rights, but not political ones. They were also protected by the various imperial codes of law from arbitrary confiscation of their property, and as in this case, the destruction of their books. He cites Roman law which granted the Jews protection from wanton assault and violence towards their places of worship. These statutes were first promulgated in the fifth century and were accepted by the Church as an authoritative source of Canon Law. There existed therefore a continuity of legislation upholding property rights in the Empire from the classical

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53 G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 21.

54 Ibid., pp. 15–35.

55 Karl Heinz Burmeister, 'Ulrich Zasius (1461–1535): Humanist und Jurist', in Paul Gerhard Schmidt: *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten*: *Biographische Profile*, pp. 105–123. See *Tütsch missiue*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, pp. 1–12.

56 *Questiones de paruulis Iudeorum Baptisandis a communi doctorum assertione dissidentes*, (Strasbourg, 1508). Cited in G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 1.

57 J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Eiv^{v} =XX^{v}). See also G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 1–14.

period.[58] Thus he sees the Jews in what is best described in modern terms by H.A. Oberman, as 'resident aliens'.[59] They were required to fulfil all imperial fiscal ordinances and were given restricted rights of residence. Punishment for crimes committed, however, could entail expulsion from the Empire.

Prior to Reuchlin's descriptive use of the term 'cives' (citizens) for Jews resident in the Empire, it had been used in Italy to regulate public affairs between Christians and Jews from a much earlier date and was common in legal practice. Many Italian authors of legal textbooks were well known in Germany and some of their books were printed there.[60] Reuchlin's study of these legal text books used in the instruction of jurisprudence in Italy would have acquainted him with this more tolerant approach to Jews. Graetz also based his view of Reuchlin's interpretation of the term '*cives*' (citizens)[61] as it appeared in Roman legal textbooks. Reuchlin applies this legal citation in the first of his arguments in the *Augenspiegel* where he states, 'the Jews as subjects of the Holy Roman Empire should be tried according to the precepts of imperial law'.[62] We have no way of knowing for certain what Reuchlin actually understood by the term '*cives*', but as a jurist he was aware that he was assigning a great privilege to them. In granting them such a status he shows great independence of mind, for he was deviating from the established policy of his society which had accorded the Jewish community limited prescribed legal rights.[63] The status of 'citizen' in a German town or city was not easily or automatically acquired and indeed for many Christians it was unobtainable. The procedures for acquiring it entailed fulfilment of specified social and economic requirements[64] and

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[58] See John H.W.G. Liebeschuetz: *Barbarians and Bishops*: *Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 146–153. A. Linder: *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, pp. 33–34. M. Maas: *Readings in Late Antiquity*, p. 197.

[59] Heiko A. Oberman: 'Johannes Reuchlin: Von Judenknechten zu Judenrechten', in Arno Herzig et. al; (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden*, pp. 39–88, here p. 62, and note 86.

[60] Markus Rafael Ackermann: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die italienische Rechtswissenschaft', in G. Dörner (ed.): *Reuchlin und Italien*, pp. 133–148, here pp. 139–141.

[61] My translation.

[62] "Zum ersten, dann die iuden als vnderthonen des hailigen roemschen reichs sollent by kaysserlichen rechten behalten werden", J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Bij^{r} = II^{r}). See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 233.

[63] See Stefan Rhein: 'Der Dunkelmännerstreit', in Hans-Peter Becht (ed.): *Johannes Reuchlin Phorcensis* (*1455–1522*). *Ein humanistischer Gelehrter* (Pforzheim, 1986), pp. 86–93, here p. 89. (Katalog zur Ausstellung).

[64] For details of the requirements to enable Jews to become statuary citizens of specified towns in the Late Middle Ages, see Hans-Jörg Gilomen, 'Städtische Sondergruppen im Bürgerrecht', pp. 125–154. Also E. Isenmann: *Die deutsche Stadt im Spätmittelalter*: pp. 76–102.

commitment to certain duties. Those Jews who were sufficiently wealthy, however, and who acceded to the stipulations of the city community were not excluded from the status of 'citizen' (Bürger). Wealthy Jewish residents of Frankfurt and Worms, Nuremberg and possibly other cities received the same civic rights as those of Christians on fulfilling the local requirements for citizenship. In Frankfurt Jews were given prescribed civic rights and were referred to as 'Burger' (citizen). They were entered with their fellow Christians in the 'register of citizens' (Burgerbuch) as owners of property and were obliged, like all citizens, to pay a fee to the town council to remain on the register as citizens of the town.[65] The city of Worms was one of the few places where Jews were granted property rights in law similar to those of Christians, but were excluded from any civic office.[66] This privilege was restricted to Jewish residents of that city alone and it was not a legal premise that could be requested or enforced elsewhere.

Thus H. Graetz in his assessment is correct to the extent that Reuchlin attempted to assign greater legal rights to the Jewish community in contrast to his jurist colleagues within the Empire, but it was not his aim to raise their culture or beliefs to those of Christians. He was later to maintain in his Latin *Defensio*[67] that he had never intended to raise the status of Jews to that of Christians, but pointed out that their books had never been condemned by any Roman legal source. Therefore their books were to be examined like those in the possession of any other citizen of the Empire and they were entitled to the protection of the Civil Law if they were not in conflict with the law. The basis of his entire legal argument-that the Jews are citizens of the Empire-meant, that they could be considered enemies of the Christian faith, but it did not follow that they were enemies of society, a distinction he tried to clarify in the text, hence his comment 'we have good gloss on this'[68]

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[65] Isidor Kracauer: *Geschichte der Juden in Frankfurt am Main* (*1150–1824*). (Frankfurt am Main, 1925), vol. 1, p. 15.

[66] Amnon Linder provides details of legislation from an earlier period which granted privileges to the Jews of Worms that were confirmed up until the fourteenth century. See A. Linder (ed.): *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, pp. 33–50. Amnon Linder (ed.): *The Jews in the Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages. Introduction, Transl., and Annotations* (Detroit, 1997), pp. 353–358.

[67] The full title is *Defensio Ioannis Reuchlin| Phorcensis LL. Doctoris| contra calumniato| res suos Colo| nienses| Summarium libri.* (Thomas Anshelm, Tübingen, 1513). A transcription of the Latin text with a modern German translation appears in, *Johannes Reuchlin*: *Sämtliche Werke* edited by Widu-Wolfgang. Ehlers et al. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999), vol. 4/1, pp. 197–443, here p. 209. For a partial English translation see E. Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 98–108.

[68] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio ($C^v = V^v$).

indicating that both Canon and Civil Law concurred on this legal point. During his trial later he distanced himself somewhat from his statement by saying he had not implied that their religion was of equal status with Christianity, but that they were subject to the same imperial code.[69] He did, however, hold to his initial statement that the Talmud should not be burned without it first being submitted to a commission to examine it and to proceed otherwise would be an illegal act.

[69] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 249–250. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 48–49.

CHAPTER THREE

REUCHLIN—A SEARCH FOR SALVATION

While attending the Diet (Reichstag) at Worms, Reuchlin received from Bishop Johannes von Dalberg a Hebrew manuscript entitled *Hortus nucis*.[1] This Jewish mystical text by Joseph Gikatilla (1248–1325) (Moses ben Samuel Ha-Kohen) attempted to show a relationship between the alphabet and divine names, a subject Reuchlin was to pursue further in the first of his Cabbalistic works, *De verbo mirifico* (1494).[2] It is not known whether Dalberg was also one of those who subscribed privately to Cabbalist beliefs but it is noteworthy, however, that in 1494 Reuchlin dedicated his *De verbo mirifico* to Dalberg,[3] which indicates at this stage of his life Reuchlin could read Hebrew or showed an interest in learning it. The bishop obviously did not reprove him in his studies, but encouraged Reuchlin's study of Hebrew and Cabbalism. However, it was his two further journeys to Italy and a diplomatic mission to Linz that were to have the greatest influence on his intellectual development and to his personal beliefs. He made his second journey to Italy in 1490, when he accompanied Ludwig Wirtemberger, the illegitimate son of his overlord Eberhard im Bart to pursue his studies

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[1] On Reuchlin and Gikatilla see the article by Karl Grözinger: 'Reuchlin und die Kabbala', in Arno Herzig, et al; (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden*, pp. 175–187, here p. 177, and note 12. This work contained some of the most important elements for the interpretation of the Cabala—the 'Gematria', 'Notarikon' and the 'Temurah'. See also Wolfgang von Abel and Reimund Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica in der Bibiliothek Johannes Reuchlins*, (Ostfildern, 2005), (*Pforzheimer Reuchlinschriften*, vol. 9). Hereafter cited with the author's name and *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*. Here pp. 146–149.

[2] For an English translation and commentary on this work see Charles Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico* and the magic debate of the late fifteenth century', in: *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 39 (1976), pp. 104–138. The text is also in: *Johann Reuchlin Sämtliche Werke* edited by Widu-Wolfgang. Ehlers et al. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1996), vol. 1. See also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 68* Konrad Leontorius to Reuchlin, pp. 211–217, and notes 7, 8, and 9; and in the same vol. *Letter 64*, Reuchlin to Johannes von Dalberg, pp. 197–203, here p. 202, and note 6.

[3] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 64*, Reuchlin to Johannes von Dalberg, pp. 197–203. Sebastian Brant was one of the editors who carried out emendations prior to it being printed. Ibid., p. 202, and note 6. Also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1. *Letter 77*, Sebastian Brant to Reuchlin, pp. 242–245, here p. 244, and note 7.

there. Reuchlin continued his study of Greek under the tutorship of Demetrios Chalkondyles (1424–1511)[4] whom he had met on his first visit at the Florentine Academy. He was recommended to this academic circle by his friend and teacher Hermolaus Barbarus (1454–1493),[5] a Venetian professor of Greek and Latin whom he had first met at Frankfurt in 1486 where Barbarus was in attendance as ambassador, to extend the good wishes of the State of Venice to the newly elected King of Rome, Maximilian I. Barbarus meanwhile had become one of Padua's leading scholars of classical writings. Reuchlin's knowledge of Greek so impressed Barbarus that he addressed him as 'Kapnion' (little smoke), the Graecized form of his surname, a title Reuchlin rarely used as he preferred to emphasise that he came from a German speaking land. The name appears in his *De verbo mirifico* (1494) where it is given to one of the disputants on Cabbalism suggesting it was symbolic for his views. On this occasion he encountered again Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) and it was he who confirmed for him, that the study of the Jewish Cabbala and Christian beliefs were directly related and could be integrated to an orthodox Christian philosophy.

Reuchlin was a skilled translator of both Greek and Latin. He translated Xenophon's works which became the first of his numerous translations of Greek into Latin and which he had later printed while lecturing at Ingolstadt University.[6] He used his profound knowledge of Greek to translate the New Testament as he indicates in the *Augenspiegel*.[7] More importantly however for his personal beliefs, he translated many works of classical authors, not only as sources of Latin prose,[8] written with great perfection, but also to search for evidence that the truths of the Christian religion were to be found in writings of classical authors such as Plato (427–347 BC) and Pythagoras (ca. 570–497 BC).[9] Reuchlin was particularly drawn to Pythagoras's philos-

[4] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 33–34.

[5] Ibid., pp. 31–34.

[6] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 94, and note 4. Karl Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', in M. Krebs, and H. Kling (eds.): *Johannes Reuchlin 1455–1522*: *Festgabe seiner Vaterstadt Pforzheim zur 500. Wiederkehr seines Geburtstages*, pp. 35–82, here p. 61.

[7] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Ciij^{v} = VII^{v}).

[8] On his ability as a translator see the article by H. Rupprich: 'Johannes Reuchlin und seine Bedeutung im europäischen Humanismus', pp. 10–34. A list of Reuchlin's translations from Greek and Latin are given in L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 95–101.

[9] Christian humanists were deeply influenced by the philosophy of these writers. See Daniel P. Walker: *The Ancient Theology*: *Studies in Christian Platonism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1972), pp. 1–4.

ophy and several of his works are cited in all of his publications.[10] These classical authors wrote on the immortality of the soul, the harmony of creation and contained allegorical hymns, riddles or mystical texts. Thus they were considered to contain beliefs common to Christian teachings. Some of the texts were said to have originated with Moses or even extended back to Adam i.e. to the beginning of Creation. They were thought to have been orally transmitted through initiated sages, and were to be found in Jewish tradition.

In Reuchlin's day, an era of religious strife and uncertainty, great credence was given to mystical religion, numerology, powerful music, and natural magic.[11] Two of the most pre-eminent philosophers in the revival and dissemination of these esoteric texts were the Italians Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Ficino's translation of the *Corpus Hermeticum* and other less well-known treatises on natural magic received widespread attention among humanist scholars in the Renaissance. This manuscript consisted of 18 tracts purported by Neo-Platonists to have been written by a mythical figure, Hermes Trismegistus, and to be based on the teachings of the Egyptian god Thoth. It contained references to astrology, magic, and Platonist philosophy. Ficino partially translated it from Greek into Latin in 1471 and thus provided scholars of Platonic philosophy with an understandable text. It had considerable influence on their beliefs, as they considered its contents to have been written prior to the establishment of Christianity.[12] It is not certain that Reuchlin ever met Ficino, although he did correspond with him.[13]

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[10] An example of his knowledge of these writers is quite evident throughout the *Augenspiegel*, as for example folio (Diij^{r} = XI^{r}).

[11] On occult philosophy and humanism see the article by Charles Zika: 'Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy', in: *Journal of Religious History*, 9 (1976/1977), pp. 223–247. Lynn Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. 4 (New York, 1966), pp. 485–591. Frances A. Yates: *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London, 1979), pp. 17–22.

[12] It now is thought to have been first written in the second and third centuries AD. The manuscript was brought to Florence in 1460 by Leonardo da Pistoia and presented to Cosimo de Medici (1389–1464). As it was written in Greek, Medici was unable to discern its contents and thus passed it to Ficino for translation. It was first printed in 1471. See Roelof van den Broek: *From Poimandres to Jacob Böhme*: *Gnosis*, *Hermeticism*, *and the Christian Tradition* (Amsterdam, 2000), p. 194. Keith Thomas: *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971), p. 267. David Englander, et al; (eds.): *Culture and Belief in Europe 1450–1600. An Anthology of Sources* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 22–28. Frances A. Yates: *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London, 1964), pp. 84 ff.

[13] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 40*, Reuchlin's draft letter for Markgrave Friedrich of Brandenburg to Demetrios Chalkondyles, Marsilio Ficino, Christoforo Landino

Mirandola's tutelage began under Ficino whose theories on natural magic Mirandola further developed. He was greatly influenced by his friendship with the Jewish philosopher Elia del Medigo (1460–1497)[14] from whom he derived his interest in Judaism and in oriental languages. Although Medigo had rejected Cabbalism as a false belief,[15] Mirandola continued to be particularly attracted to it, and it led to his presentation of Cabbalism to the humanist debate on religion in this era. Mirandola was also friends with Cardinal Domenico Grimani, one of the intellectuals associated with the Florentine Academy. Grimani was particularly interested in Hebrew culture and especially in Cabbalism. Prior to entering the Church he had acted as a diplomat for the city of Venice and in that capacity had attended the court of Frederick III in 1489, just three years before Reuchlin became known as a Hebrew scholar. It is unknown whether Reuchlin ever became acquainted personally with Grimani, but he would certainly have heard of him and of his intellectual interest in the Cabbala.

Mirandola offered a Christian's view of this twelfth-century form of Jewish philosophy,[16] the basis of which was related to Neo-Platonic Christian tradition. He interpreted Christian dogmas in a mystical manner, and applied a form of Cabbalism to the Scriptures to enquire into their supposedly hidden meaning. He considered Hebrew letters as being the identical script used by Moses and hence of particular significance, as he believed they contained a hidden meaning infused by Moses.[17] Reuchlin would have been aware of Mirandola's published works on the Cabbala and hence found him a natural ally in his own studies of the Cabbala.

Mirandola obtained several works on Cabbalist beliefs from Jewish converts.[18] One of the most influential of these was Flavius Mithridates,[19] who

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and the other professors of Latin language at Florenz, pp. 124–126. Also *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 43*, Marsilio Ficino to Ludwig Vergenhans and Reuchlin, pp. 130–134.

[14] He was also called Medego and Elias Cretensis. On Medigo, see Carlos Gilly (ed.): *Magic, Alchemy and Science Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam, 2002), p. 129. Also the article by Shlomo Simonsohn, 'Giovanni Pico della Mirandola on Jews and Judaism', in Jeremy Cohen (ed.): *From Witness to Witchcraft*: *Jews and Judaism in Medieval Christian Thought* (Wiesbaden, 1997), pp. 403–417, here p. 404. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 167.

[15] See here the article by MarianneAwerbuch: 'Über Juden und Judentum', in Arno Herzig, et al; (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden*, pp. 193–194.

[16] See the entry for 'Christian Kabbalahists' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 11, pp. 671–673.

[17] See S. Simonsohn: 'Giovanni Pico della Mirandola on Jews and Judaism', p. 411.

[18] See Ronnie Po-chia Hsia: 'Die Konversion der Juden zur Zeit Reuchlins', in Daniela Hacke, and Bernd Roeck (eds.): *Die Welt im Augenspiegel*: *Johannes Reuchlin und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart, 2002), pp. 161–168, here p. 162. Shlomo Simonsohn: 'Some well-known Jewish converts during the Renaissance', in: *Revue des Etudes Juives*, 168 (1–2) (1989), pp. 17–52.

[19] Mithridates translated some Arabic mystical works and later taught theology in Ger-

became Mirandola's tutor and probably first introduced him to these Cabbalistic works. He is known to have instructed Mirandola in Semitic languages. Mithridates was a recognised Hebrew scholar, who later taught at the universities of Tübingen and Cologne, and had asserted that the truth of Christian mysteries could be proved from Jewish esoteric sources.[20] In a sermon held on Good Friday 1481 before the Pope and the College of Cardinals he elaborated on how the Jews obscured their mystical teachings and obstinately refused to elucidate them, thereby preventing Christians to partake in the superior knowledge of God.[21] Mirandola presented a description of the Cabbala in his 'Conclusions' (*Conclusiones*, 1486) and the 'Defence' (*Apologia*, 1487), and propounded a dictum 'there is no other science that provides us with greater certainty of Christ's divinity than magic and the Cabbala'.[22]This was part of the *Nine Hundred Theses* (*Conclusions*)[23] which he had taken to Rome in 1486 to prove, in what was to be a public debate,[24] that Hebrew and Christian philosophies, together with the wisdom of pagans, could be synthesised to confirm the truth of Christianity. Seventy-two 'conclusions' were concerned with the Cabbala, where he asserted the doctrine of the Trinity was corroborated and the end of the world was foretold. This led to a Papal Commission being constituted by Pope Innocent VIII (1484–1492)[25] to examine the orthodoxy of his views.

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many for a short period after being accused of crimes in Rome. He remains an obscure figure and what eventually became of him is unknown. Some details of his life appear in an article by Umberto Cassuto: 'Wer war der Orientalist Mithridates?', in *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*, 5 (1934), pp. 230–236. Chaim Wirszubski: 'Giovanni Pico's companion to Kabbalistic symbolism', in Efraim E. Urbach (ed.): *Studies in Mysticism and Religion*: *Presented to Gershom G. Scholem on his Seventieth Birthday* (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 352–362. F.A. Yates: *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*, p. 19.

[20] Chaim Wirszubski: *Pico DellaMirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), pp. 69; 75–81; and p. 83.

[21] He had a particular interest in rendering the Jews in negative light, thus we cannot be sure whether his statements are based on any true accounts of actual Jewish behaviour. C. Wirszubski: *Pico DellaMirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, pp. 106–108.

[22] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dv^r = $XIII^r$).

[23] Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses* (*1486*): *The Evolution of Traditional Religious Philosophical Systems with Text, Transl., and Commentary* by Stephen A. Farmer (Tempe, AZ, 1998). F.A. Yates: *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*, pp. 18–20. C. Wirszubski: *Pico DellaMirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, pp. 122–125.

[24] The debate never took place. L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, pp. 485–511.

[25] Pope Innocent VIII failed to carry out any reforms within the Church and involved the Papal States in a war with Neapolitan princes in 1485 and 1486. He is regarded as being

Following its deliberations the Commission condemned a number of his theses on magic for their heretical content and a ban was imposed on both works. A member of the examining commission, Peter Garisia,[26] composed a reply to the propositions in which he indiscriminately condemned all kinds of magic as being contrary to Catholic beliefs and natural philosophy, and castigated the Cabbala as being the work of heretical Jews. He rejected Mirandola's theses and set out why they were not compatible with the Church's teachings. Garisia's work was printed in Rome in 1489. In spring of the following year Reuchlin was in Rome, and through his friendship with Jakob Questenberg, (ca. 1470–1524) a member of the Papal Curia would have been well informed of the entire debate. Reuchlin had fleeting contacts with Mirandola at the academic circle that attended the Platonic Academy of Florence. Mirandola had translated three Cabbalistic works at the command of Pope Sixtus IV,[27] which Reuchlin was later to use. Pope Sixtus was a great patron of the arts and science. He was responsible for some of the most famous cultural monuments in Rome such as the building of the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican Library. He was also renowned for the darker side of his character indicated by his nepotism and the instigation of the Inquisition. His abuse of papal privilege and neglect of reform was to lead the Church into the crisis which culminated in the division of the Roman Church half a century later. He took a keen interest in the Cabbala, and as Reuchlin states, ordered it to be translated into Latin. Reuchlin was well-known to the Pope as he defended the Elector Philip of Palatine at the Papal Court in 1498, where he obtained a release from the ban imposed on Philip following a legal dispute with an abbot of a monastery. He chose to ignore Garcia's reproach and emphasises that Mirandola was rehabilitated and that some of his teachings were granted papal approval. This was sufficient proof that his studies of the Cabbala were legitimate and orthodox and therefore could be pursued. In order to study

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more tolerant of Jews and of adopting a pragmatic approach to money lending. See the entry for 'Innozenz VIII' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, col. 692. Heinz Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (13.-20. Jh.)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), pp. 562–564.

[26] Peter Garisia alias Pedro Garcias (1440–1505) was Bishop of Usselen (Ales) in Sardinia and later Bishop of Barcelona. See L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, pp. 497–499. William G. Craven: *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Symbol of his Age*: *Modern Interpretations of a Renaissance Philosopher* (Geneva, 1981), p. 52. J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dv^v = $XIII^v$).

[27] See the entry for 'Sixtus IV', in: *LThK*, vol. 9, cols. 810–811. J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dv^v = $XIII^v$). L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 172.

the Jewish Cabbala, however, it was necessary to be able to read it in its original language and thus to avoid misunderstandings that could occur in translations, as had become evident in the various translations of the Christian Bible.

Reuchlin's study of Hebrew and the Cabbala had begun much earlier and it is known that while he was on a diplomatic mission to Frederick III's court at Linz in 1492 he made the acquaintance of Jakob ben Jehiel Loans († 1505),[28] a Jewish scholar, and personal physician to the Emperor. Loans instructed him in Hebrew and probably introduced him to the Cabbala conveying to him its importance in Jewish belief. Reuchlin held him in great esteem for his erudition, and the portrait of the Jew Simon, given in his Cabbalistic work *De arte cabalistica* (1517) is an indirect reference to Loans.[29] He was not his first tutor of Hebrew, however, for Reuchlin seems to have commenced his studies under another Jewish teacher named Calman,[30] but Loans was certainly the most inspiring. It was probably through his influence that Frederick III presented Reuchlin with a rare manuscript in 1492. This was a parchment copy of a Hebrew Bible that contained the Targum Onkelos, a Jewish interpretation of an Aramaic version of the Pentateuch. Loans recognised Reuchlin's learning in the Hebrew language and would have been aware of his attempts to translate passages of the Bible.

Apart from these named teachers he was mainly self-taught which indicates his remarkable ability for languages. He received further instruction in Hebrew from Obaja ben Jakob Sforno (ca. 1475–1550)[31] while in Rome in 1498, for which he paid a gold coin for each lesson.[32] Sforno apparently also encouraged him in his study of the Cabbala.[33] His willingness to pay such an amount for tuition in a language which was rarely studied by Christians shows its significance for him. It was not alone the intellectual interest of a humanist that attracted him to Hebrew, unlike in his studies of Greek and Latin. There was a far stronger personal element. He says in one of his

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[28] Loans' nephew Josel von Rosheim (1478–1554) was one of the most well known leaders of the Jewish community in the German lands in the sixteenth century. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 105*, Reuchlin to Jakob Jehiel Loans, pp. 338–339, here p. 338, and note 1.

[29] On his efforts to study Hebrew see L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 32 ff., and pp. 103–142. For Reuchlin's Hebrew books, see W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*.

[30] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico*', p. 108.

[31] See the entry for 'Sforno' in *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 18, pp. 333–334.

[32] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 138*, Reuchlin to Dionysius Reuchlin, pp. 33–55, here p. 48, and note 27.

[33] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 46.

letters, he feels when reading Hebrew texts as if God is speaking directly to him[34] and he refers to it as the 'holy language'.[35] Hebrew, he maintains, is the language in which God and the angels communicate with chosen people.[36]

At this period of time the numbers of non-Jewish scholars of Hebrew whom Reuchlin could consult in the German speaking area were very few. Pope Clement V (1305–1314) at the Council of Vienne (1312) had recommended that chairs of Hebrew be established at the universities of Paris, Oxford, Salamanca and Bologna, but within the German speaking lands no university faculty had been established for this subject until the fifteenth century. The Pope's early death, however, resulted in the original decrees never being officially published. His successor, Pope John XXII (1316–1334), published what were considered to be reconstructed decrees in 1317 based on the Council debates. These were incorporated into the Code of Canon Law under the title the 'Clementines'.

Reuchlin refers to this codex in the *Augenspiegel*,[37] and in particular to a decree that chairs of Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic and Arabic should be established at the universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, and Salamanca. The Council of Basle in 1434 renewed the decree of the Council of Vienne, but no mention was made as to whether it should be extended to include the already founded German universities of Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg, Cologne, Erfurt, Würzburg, and Leipzig. Hence Reuchlin's plea to the Emperor that he should have the Council's decrees implemented at these universities. The establishment of faculties of Hebrew would of course also confirm his own personal view of the importance and usefulness of the language and would validate his viewpoint.

In July 1498 Reuchlin purchased two Hebrew grammar manuscripts for which he paid 'many ducats'. One of them was a manuscript from 1282 and contained the first part of David Kimchi's grammar. Reuchlin spent enormous sums in purchasing books. No details are given of the second one only that it was a good text book (*liber intellectus boni*) by someone called Moses, without a surname, but it is probably the book he refers to

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[34] Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 162*, Reuchlin to Nikolaus Ellenbog, pp. 129–139, here p. 130.

[35] Ibid., p. 131.

[36] Ibid., p. 130.

[37] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folios (Eiv^{v} = XX^{v}), and on the following non-paginated page. See the entry for 'Vienne, 3 Konzil', in: *LThK*, vol. 10, cols. 779–781. F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 77, and note 59. Stefan Sudmann: *Das Basler Konzil. Synodal-Praxis zwischen Routine und Revolution* (Frankfurt am Main, 2005), p. 277.

in the *Augenspiegel*[38] by Moses ibn Gabirol. Prior to the publication of the *Augenspiegel* Reuchlin had completed and published a Hebrew dictionary entitled *Rudimenta Hebraica* (*1506*).[39] In a letter to his brother he points out that many mistakes in the Latin version of the Old Testament of the Bible could be avoided if scholars understood the language of Hebrew. The whole of theology was based on the translation of the Bible and thus it was essential to have its words correctly represented.[40] Therefore he decided to write such a work to enable those who wished, like himself, to understand the Bible in its exact meaning. Thus his ability as a Hebrew scholar was already well established.

The *Rudimenta Hebraica* is a three-volume, complete grammar and dictionary of Hebrew. It was the first Hebrew grammar to be composed by a Christian, designed primarily to provide explanations of Hebrew terms and to comment on passages in the Bible, but not as a primer of Hebrew. The printing of it was a financial disaster for Reuchlin. He was required to pay the printer, Amerbach, for the first run of 1500 copies, but lack of demand for this specialised work left 700 unsold. Reuchlin's sister Elizabeth had to organise the transport of the remaining unsold copies in 1511, which involved her in debts for the cost of transport of several barrels of books. Some fifteen years after his death a second edition was published. L. Geiger's detailed examination of it showed that there were very few incorrect entries.[41]

Reuchlin used several of the then accessible and known manuscripts of Hebrew grammar for his study of Hebrew, which, as Geiger points out, must have been a Herculean task as the expressions used in those texts were frequently in the form of rabbinical idioms. For a Christian student of the language to unravel them necessitated considerable study and intellectual skill. The *Rudimenta* was used by Luther for his study of the Bible and by the Swiss Reformer Huldrych Zwingli (1481–1531) to teach himself Hebrew.

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[38] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dv^{v} = XIII^{v}). L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 130 and note 3. W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 215–220 and note 18, p. 217. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', pp. 75–76 and note 319.

[39] L. Geiger provides a detailed description of this work and lists some of the Jewish references Reuchlin used. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 110–133. Also Hans-R. Schwab: *Johannes Reuchlin. Deutschlands erster Humanist*, pp. 121–128. For an English description see D. Price: *The Campaign to destroy Jewish books*, p. 23 & pp. 68–75.

[40] Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 138*, Reuchlin to Dionysius Reuchlin, pp. 33–55, here p. 33.

[41] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 119.

Reuchlin could hardly have envisaged how his knowledge of that language would cause him to write the *Augenspiegel* and to initiate a debate which to the present is unresolved, and perhaps is insoluble. In the Dukedom of Württemberg there were too few resident Jews capable of instructing him as they had been expelled from the Swabian imperial cities. In 1477 the University of Tübingen strictly forbade Jews to reside in the city.[42] The last recorded Jew to reside in Stuttgart is dated 1488. The Duke imposed severe restrictions on them. In 1495 they were not permitted to claim outstanding payments of interest in court and thus he removed part of their livelihood from them. In his will he decreed that Württemberg should be free of all Jewish residents. Reuchlin remarks that there was not a single Jew with whom he could discuss the *Augenspiegel* before writing it.[43]

[42] Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, *Letter 270*, Reuchlin to Pietro Galatino, pp. 219–228, here p. 225, and note 21.

[43] See *Ain clare verstentnus in tütsch/ vff Doctor Johannsen Reüchlins/ ratschlag von den iuden büchern vor/mals auch zu latein/ imm Augenspiegel vßgangen*. [Tübingen: Thomas Anshelm, March 1512]. A clarification in German of doctor J. Reuchlins's counsel on the Jewish books previously published also in Latin in the *Augenspiegel*. My translation of the title. The transcribed text is rendered in: Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers et al., *Johannes Reuchlin Samtlich Werke*, vol. 4/1, (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 171–196, here p. 175. Only one original edition was published.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE REUCHLIN 'AFFAIR' UNFOLDS

In order to establish why Reuchlin had the *Augenspiegel* printed at that particular date, it is necessary to follow the course of events that led to the pamphlet's immediate publication. A cursory analysis would indicate it to be a liberal document of a humanist scholar pleading for a more enlightened and tolerant approach to Judaism while defending the right of intellectual freedom. The author himself gives a far less altruistic motive, and publicly claims he published the *Augenspiegel* ostensibly to redeem his character. This had resulted from allegations made in an earlier publication entitled 'Hand Mirror' (*Handt Spiegel*, Mainz; 1511) by an apostate Moravian Jew, named Johannes Pfefferkorn (1469?-1521).[1] He had accused him of accepting bribes from Jews and of not being the true author of his scholarly works. He specifically criticised Reuchlins's legal report on Jewish religious books which Reuchlin had submitted to the imperial commission set up to investigate these books in 1510. Reuchlin's submission entitled, 'Counsel on whether one should confiscate, suppress and burn all the books of the Jews' (*Ratschlag ob man den Juden alle ire bücher nemmen/*

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[1] For a list of Pfefferkorn's works and biographical details see, Ellen Martin: *Die deutschen Schriften des Johannes Pfefferkorn. Zum Problem des Judenhasses und der Intoleranz in der Zeit der Vorreformation*, pp. 11–25 & 392–393. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 177*, Reuchlin to Zyprian von Serntein, pp. 181–185, here p. 184, and note 4. Also Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns* (Tübingen, 1989), (*Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early modern Judaism*, vol. 3.), pp. 9–12 & pp. 201–204. See also Johannes Pfefferkorn: *The Jews' mirror* (*Judenspiegel*), here pp. 1–32.

A rather dated, but useful work on Pfefferkorn's life is Meier Spanier: 'Zur Charakteristik Johannes Pfefferkorns', in: *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*, 6 (1938), pp. 209–229. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 209–226. A reference to Pfefferkorn's year of death has been uncovered by R. Jütte. See Robert Jütte: 'Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522) und die soziale Frage seiner Zeit-Ein Beitrag zur Konjekturalhistorie', in: Daniela Hacke, and Bernd Roeck (eds.): *Die Welt im Augenspiegel*: *Johannes Reuchlin und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart, 2002) pp. 41–42. Some further details on his life are provided by E. Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 3–13. See also the entry for 'Pfefferkorn' in: P.G. Bietenholz & T.B. Deutscher (eds.): *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, vol. 3, pp. 76 ff.

abthun vnnd verbrennen soll).[2] The commission became necessary following Pfefferkorn's personal attempts to have Jewish religious books confiscated and banned. His motivation for this is not fully evident. He had begun his campaign against all Jewish books a number of years earlier following the publication of his *Der Juden Spiegel* (Cologne, 1507),[3] but this self-imposed task had not been sanctioned by the imperial authorities and thus could not be considered legal. He had already published a number of polemical texts critical of Jewish life and customs showing authentic scenes of Jewish religious practices. Among these was one entitled *Ich heyss eyn buchlijn der iuden beicht* (Cologne, 1508) with woodcuts of Jews at prayer in a synagogue, with their eyes blinded, indicating the superiority of Christianity.[4] In 1509, he managed to obtain an imperial mandate[5] that permitted him to confiscate and examine all the books of the Jews resident in the Empire for what he considered to be slanderous or contrary to Christian teaching. Through this campaign he hoped above all to confiscate every copy of the Talmud which he considered to be the main reason why Jews did not convert to Christianity. To help him obtain the imperial mandate, he had gained the support and encouragement of the Chief Inquisitor Jacobus Hoogstraeten (1460–1527)[6] together with the theological faculty of the University of Cologne.[7] He had also procured a letter of recommendation from the Emperor's sister, Kunigunde.[8] She had entered a religious congregation, the Order of St Francis, on the death of her husband,[9] and fulfilled what she must have considered her religious duty by agreeing to Pfefferkorn's request rather than any explicit Jewish antipathy. Before he made his approach to her, Pfefferkorn

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[2] My translation. See *Augenspiegel*, folio ($B^r = I^r$). (The title is cited hereafter in the short form as *Ratschlag*).

[3] The complete text appears in Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, pp. 205–230.

[4] See R.I. Cohen: *Jewish Icons*: *Art and Society in Modern Europe*, pp. 11–27.

[5] An account of Pfefferkorn's efforts to procure the mandates and their consequences is provided by L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 215–227. See also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 170*, Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen to Reuchlin, pp. 154–157, here p. 156, and note 4.

[6] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 29–30.

[7] The theological faculty had been granted authority by Pope Alexander VI to combat heresy, witchcraft and magic. Its teaching methods were based on *via antiqua*. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 56–57. See also the article by Franz Machilek: 'Schulen und gelehrte Bildung', in G. Bott (ed.): *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 89–116, here p. 98.

[8] Ellen Martin: *Die deutschen Schriften des Johannes Pfefferkorn. Zum Problem des Judenhasses und der Intoleranz in der Zeit der Vorreformation* p. 138.

[9] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 216.

had obtained similar letters from preaching Orders at Mainz, Heidelberg, Ulm and Munich and these supporting letters would have been sufficient proof to her of the righteousness of his campaign.

On receipt of the document Pfefferkorn brought it 'personally to me (Reuchlin) because I am knowledgeable in Hebrew with the request and desire that I ride at once with him to the Rhine and assist in the execution of the mandate'.[10] Reuchlin's reply was a cautious rejection claiming it was a praiseworthy task to instigate procedures against such books, but that he had reservations about the legality of the terms of the mandate, and he was willing to point out the relevant grounds for his concern.[11]

The mandate was not widely implemented, but due to Pfefferkorn's personal intervention, the civil authorities at Frankfurt adopted a strict enforcement policy and confiscated a large number of Jewish books irrespective of their contents.[12] The examination of the Jewish books had to be executed according to a defined legal procedure: the title of each confiscated book had to be entered in two registers by a notary public, one for the Jewish authorities and a second for the imperial records. 430 books had already been confiscated before Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel* was published. Frankfurt was the centre of the Jewish book trade and had a large and wealthy Jewish community[13] at this period. Leading members of the community petitioned the town council and the Emperor to remove the restrictions, pointing out that the authorities and Pfefferkorn had exceeded the terms of the mandate in that they attempted to confiscate all Hebrew books. Their petition was unsuccessful, however, and thus all Jewish publications then became subject to confiscation. Inspired by his success, Pfefferkorn immediately proceeded to the towns of Bingen, Deutz, Mainz, Lahnstein and Lorch and initiated similar confiscations.[14]

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[10] 'Mit bit vnnd begere/ die weil ich der hebraische sprach vnderricht were/ das ich dann wölt mit im hinab ann den Rein reitten/ im das helffen wider die iuden volstrecken/' J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aij^{r}).

[11] Ibid., 'dan wie wol die mainung betreffend die schmachbücher im grundt gut und loblich sei/ so hab es doch der rechten form halb ettlich gebrechen vnd mengel/ die ich im auch mit dem finger gezaigt hab.' (that although the purpose [of the mandate] concerning the slanderous books was good and laudable, nevertheless it had several formal legal defects and deficiencies which I pointed out to him). My translation.

[12] 168 books were confiscated from the synagogue alone and brought to St Martha's Hospital. Altogether he confiscated over 1200 books in the city. See Konrad Schilling (ed.): *Monumenta Judaica* (Cologne, 1963), vol. 1, p. 150, and notes 5–6.

[13] I. Kracauer: *Geschichte der Juden in Frankfurt am Main* (*1150–1824*), vol. 1, p. 15, and note 1.

[14] W.P. Eckert gives a comprehensive account of the relations between Christians and Jews in those areas where Pfefferkorn was most active. See Willehad P. Eckert: 'Das Verhältnis

However, the Archbishop of the diocese, Uriel von Gemmingen (1468–1514), formally objected to Pfefferkorn's crusade on the grounds, that the terms of the mandate required that any confiscation should take place only in the presence of the local clergy. He considered Pfefferkorn's campaign and the implementation of the mandate an encroachment on his authority, as all matters pertaining to the clergy were his prerogative, and consequently instructed his clergy not to involve themselves further in the affair until specifically commanded by him. Uriel von Gemmingen was the archbishop of Mainz and as such was Primate of the Catholic Church in Germany. He was also one of the three ecclesiastical electors who, together with the four secular electors, chose the Emperor. He was a well educated jurist who tried to introduce reforms in the Church. He adopted a humane approach to Jews, permitting them to reside in his diocese and appointed a Jewish doctor to act as supreme judge in matters concerning their personal affairs.

The Archbishop informed the Emperor of Pfefferkorn's lack of Hebrew knowledge and that therefore he was unqualified to perform the full instructions of the mandate. Following a meeting between the Archbishop and Pfefferkorn a private agreement was reached, that no further action would be taken until the views of scholars were obtained as to which Jewish books constituted a threat to Christian beliefs. This change in the terms required the permission of the Emperor and thus a further mandate was requested from him. The confiscated books meanwhile remained in the possession of the authorities at Frankfurt. The Jewish leaders in Frankfurt meanwhile again petitioned the Emperor who at this stage was more willing to listen to their plea, due to his personal desolate financial state. An agreement was reached that in return for their willingness to provide him with a loan to pay his debts to the Duke of Brunswick[15] their books were to be returned to their custody 'until further notice from him.'[16]

Pfefferkorn was determined to proceed with his crusade and with some difficulty obtained a further mandate[17] in the same year, which reiterated the terms of the first, but with the additional clause that qualified advice

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von Christen und Juden im Mittelalter und Humanismus. Ein Beitrag zur Geistes-und Kulturgeschichte', in Konrad Schilling (ed.): *Monumenta Judaica*, vol. 1 (Cologne, 1963), pp. 131–193.

[15] I. Kracauer, *Geschichte der Juden in Frankfurt am Main* (*1150–1824*), vol. 1, pp. 262ff. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin,* pp. 215–227. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 22–25.

[16] *Augenspiegel,* Aij^{v}. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 225, and note 2.

[17] Ibid., pp. 202–290.

should be sought on the Jewish books from those experts on Hebrew mentioned in the document. The Archbishop was commanded to obtain recommendations on the issue from 'the universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg, as well as from Jakob Hoogstraeten, Inquisitor General and doctor of Scripture, Johannes Reuchlin, doctor of laws, Victor von Karpen,[18] priest, and other scholars of the Hebrew language and laws who are non-Jews'.[19]

Ironically it was Pfefferkorn who recommended Reuchlin to von Gemmingen because of his legal and Hebrew expertise and therefore a person qualified to evaluate Jewish writings. Pfefferkorn wished to gain the support of people in authority who would encourage and confirm his actions. Thus hoping to obtain the support of Reuchlin, a renowned Hebrew scholar, would have added immense prestige to his conversion campaign.[20]

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[18] Victor von Carpen (also Karpen; ca. 1422–1515) was an apostate Jew who later became a priest and theologian at Cologne University. I have not been able to establish that he collaborated with Pfefferkorn though geographically they were both active in the same areas and had similar approaches in their anti-Judaism campaigns. He published around the same time as Pfeffkorn's publication a booklet entitled: Viktor von Carben: *Dem durchleuchtigsten hochgeboren fursten und herren herre Ludwig Phalzgrauen bey rein* .... (n.p. 1508/1509). *Hier inne wirt gelesen, wie Her Victor von Carben, Welcher eyn Rabi der Iude gewest ist zu Christlichem glawbn komen*. Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 36 and n. 90. See also Stephen G. Burnett: 'Distorted mirrors: Antonius Margaritha, Johann Buxtdorf and Christian Ethnographies of the Jews', in: *Sixteenth Century Journal*, XXV/2 (1994), pp. 275–287, here p. 275 and n. 1. Several editions of this work were printed. See here Yaacov Deutsch, '*Von der Iuden Ceremonien*: Representations of Jews in sixteenth-century Germany', in: D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 335–356, here p. 346. An indication of von Carpen's impartiality can be gained from a disputation, which he ordered to be held before Jewish scholars and in the presence of clerics, to debate the accusation that they libelled and mocked Christ, Mary and Christians. See Heinz Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus- Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (13.-20. Jh.)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), pp. 592–595.

L. Geiger gives him the name 'von Karben' throughout his biography of Reuchlin. He also states he was a converted Jew and like Pfefferkorn one of the most virulent anti-Jewish demagogues. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 208–209; 221. In the original text used for this translation his name appears as 'von Korb' and 'von Corbo' See J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folios (Aij^{v}) and (Aiij^{r}). See also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 169* Kaiser. Maximilian I. an die Universitäten Köln, Mainz, Erfurt und Heidelberg sowie an Jakob Hoogstraeten, Reuchlin und Viktor von Karben pp. 150–154, here p. 153 and n. 3.

[19] 'vniuersiteten Cöln/Mentz/Erffurt vnd Haidelberg Jacoben hochstraß ketzermaister zu Cöln lerer der hailigenn schrifft. Johansen Reüchlin lerer der recht. Victorn von Corbo priester/ und allen vnd yegklichen der hebraischen gesetz/ schrifften vnd wesens gelerten vnd verstendigen die nit iuden sein'. J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aiij^{r}).

[20] For an account of the meeting with Pfefferkorn, see J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aij^{r}).

In the reports submitted subsequently, Reuchlin's was, however, the singular dissenting voice, though only he could provide a qualified opinion due to his knowledge of Hebrew. Von Karpen's report is missing. The submission from the University of Mainz concluded that the Talmudic books were the greatest obstacle to conversion, and hence should be confiscated and all other Jewish books should be examined for their heretical content. The theological faculty of Cologne University declared that the Talmud had already been condemned by Popes Gregory IX (1227–1241)[21] and Innocent IV for its blasphemy and therefore should be burned.[22]

This was not quite correct as Pope Innocent IV permitted the Talmud in France to be confiscated and burned, but this was not to be seen as a papal decree for all countries. Decrees banning the Talmud and ordering it to be burned had been issued on several occasions throughout the Middle Ages. It was only under the late medieval Papacy that the real destruction of Jewish literature began. Pope Gregory IX issued a directive in 1239 advocating the confiscation of all Jewish books in France. The printing of Jewish material was subject to licence and strictly controlled. Printed Hebrew texts first appeared in the late 1470s, but only in 1520 was official permission granted by Pope Leo X for unrestricted printing by Christian publishers.[23] Permission was granted to Christian printing houses to publish the first complete edition of the Talmud, which was then printed between 1523–1524 by Daniel Bomberger and has retained the format to the present day.[24]

Cologne theological faculty recommended the confiscation and destruction of the Talmud, for in addition to having been already condemned, in its opinion the Talmud contained blasphemous and heretical material contrary to the Law of Moses. Furthermore, the other Jewish religious books should be confiscated, with the exception of their Bible, and their contents examined, for the faculty suspected they also contained anti-Christian comments. Hoogstraeten's report was in agreement with that of the University's faculty. The report of the University of Mainz declared that all Jewish books including their Bible should be confiscated as these, together with

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[21] H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (13.-20. Jh.)*, pp. 109–134.

[22] J. Cohen provides an account of the events leading to the condemnation of the Talmud. Jeremy Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews* (Ithaca, 1982), pp. 51–76. H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (13.-20. Jh.)*, pp. 166–193.

[23] J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, p. 62.

[24] A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, p. 76.

their money lending trade, were the chief obstacles to their conversion. Therefore their books should be removed from them until they had been approved by professional theologians, and their practice of money lending should be forbidden. Heidelberg University dissented, maintaining it was inopportune to make a judgement on such an issue, and requested an extension in order to deliberate further on the matter.

Erfurt University was unable to provide a decision by the required date and no evidence of their actual submission has been found. In his later publication entitled *Beschyrmung* (1516) Pfefferkorn maintained, that both the University of Erfurt and von Karpen agreed that the Talmud should be burned.[25] It would appear from other sources that the Erfurt commission adopted a more cautious approach, and suggested only those books should be confiscated that libelled the Christian faith or contained untruths, but did not recommend a general confiscation of their religious books. Von Korb's decision is not documented although Pfefferkorn states that he concurred with the University of Cologne. This would seem most likely, as his polemical anti-Jewish writings published previously would tend to confirm this view.[26]

None of the other university experts are known or their competency in Hebrew which was an essential requirement to form a judicious opinion. Many of the universities in the German areas of the Empire at this period had neither Hebrew nor Greek faculties. The appointment of qualified non-Jewish Hebrew scholars, as required by the imperial mandate, would have involved considerable time and costs, which none of those requested to submit opinions were likely to do as the outcome of the whole affair was uncertain. Hoogstraeten[27] had no knowledge of Hebrew and based his views on translations and opinions of polemical writers, whose texts were designed to aid conversion campaigns. Among these was the work of Raymon Marti's *Pugio fidei*.[28] This is one of the works Reuchlin cites as evidence that even polemical texts do not call for the destruction of the Talmud. Hoogstraeten quoted St Jerome, one of the Church Fathers,

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[25] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 171*, Reuchlin to Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen, pp. 158–164, here pp. 163–164, and note 19. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 236, and note 4. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 25–28.

[26] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 234–238. See also H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 27.

[27] On Hoogstraeten's lack of Hebrew knowledge, see H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 26, and note 43.

[28] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Cij^{r} = VI^{r}), and p. 138 in my translation. See also H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 95.

who wrote that the Jews cursed Jesus daily in their synagogues in prayers, whereas Reuchlin supports Jewish polemical allegations by his non-committal attitude to their prayers.[29] The final submissions of the universities can therefore be hardly seen as unprejudiced.

Hoogstraeten as Grand Inquisitor concurred with the opinion of Cologne University.[30] He particularly reprimanded Reuchlin for his assertion that the Bible contained evidence to support the study of the Talmud as an additional aid to Christian sources.[31] He accused him of having insulted Catholic theologians with the remarks he made on their learning, and pointed out that there were great scholars in the Church, such as St Jerome and others who were competent in Greek and Hebrew and, therefore, he considered Reuchlin's insinuations regarding their inability as an attack on the teaching of the Church.[32] One of the central accusations made against him was of favouring Judaism to the detriment of the Christian religion. This he maintained was clearly evident in Reuchlin's criticism of the Church's practice of including a prayer for the so called 'unfaithful Jews' (*perfidos Iudaeos*) in the Easter services. Reuchlin's argument, that Jews had a right to defend themselves against such defamation, was based on a legal principle promulgated by Nicholas de Tudeschis (1386–1445)[33] who had declared, that when a false accusation is made, the offended person has the right to call the other a liar.[34]Hoogstraeten charged Reuchlin of deliberately distorting the meaning of the term *perfidus*. The correct translation, he maintained, was not 'unfaithful' but 'faithless' as was clear from the context in the prayer. In support of his argument he asserted, the words referred to a passage in the Bible, 2 Cor. 3,15–16, where it says that 'whenever Moses is read by the Israelites a veil lies over their minds; but when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed'. He sees the Church's prayer therefore as a plea to God for their conversion, and not as an accusation that they had broken from the religion of their forefathers. He also pointed out that by accusing

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[29] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel,* folio (C^r = V^r). See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 29–45. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 207, and note 2; p. 214, and note 1.

[30] An examination and comparison of both the university's and Hoogstraeten's documents shows evidence that they came from the same source. See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 27.

[31] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel,* folio ($Ciiij^r$ = $VIII^r$). H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 102–107.

[32] J. Reuchlin. *Augenspiegel,* folio (Dvi^r = $XIIII^r$). H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 44–45.

[33] See the entry for 'Nicolaus de Tudeschis' in: *LThK*, vol. 7, col. 1000.

[34] See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 111, and note 99.

the Church of lying, Reuchlin should be punished for heresy.[35] In addition, he saw Reuchlin's toleration of the Jewish rejection of the teaching of the Incarnation as discrediting the Christian religion. He attributed the main reason for Jews non-acceptance of Christianity was their stubbornness, blindness and refusal to accept the truths of the Christian religion.[36] He based his argument on one of the major doctrinal differences between Christians and Jews. Christians believe the Messiah had, in the person of Jesus, already come, whereas the Jews take a diametrical view and maintain the Messiah has yet to come. Christian mendicant monks out on missionary campaigns amongst Jewish communities maintained they could prove from Christian and Rabbinic sources the validity of their teachings. These missionaries concluded that if the Jews could be convinced of the advent of the Messiah they would have to abandon their Jewish religion and become part of the Christian Church.[37] The relationship of the two ideologies led to complex and contradictory policies between the Church and Jews.[38] Hoogstraeten adopted a rigid missionary approach to the Jews where refusal to accept the Christian religion was to be considered an illegal act and a form of subversion. He cited Thomas Aquinas to justify the Church's right to confiscate Jewish books. He also maintained that Reuchlin's use of the term 'citizens' (*cives*) to describe the status of the Jews discredited the Church.

Furthermore, he accused Reuchlin of having given a positive meaning to the term 'haeresis' and used the pious words of St Paul to support his arguments. Reuchlin's study of the Bible led him to examine the original Greek sources for his interpretation of the word whereas, his opponent followed a more traditional rendition based on an exegesis of the *Vulgate*, the Latin version of the Bible. Reuchlin's criticism was based on its incorrect translation from Hebrew and Greek and not on interpretation of its

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[35] According to H. Peterse modern research confirms that Hoogstraeten's interpretation of the term 'perfidus' as 'faithless' was in line with traditional Catholic teaching. See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 111–112. See also *Gutachten über das Jüdische Schrifttum, Edited and Transl.* by Antonie Leinz-von Dessauer (Constance, 1965), p. 115, and note 34. Hereafter cited as *Gutachten*, ed. Leinz-von Dessauer (1965) with page number.

[36] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dviij^{r} = XVI^{r}). See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 48. On the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on this theme see the entry for 'Inkarnation' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 678–679.

[37] See J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Ciiij^{v} = VIII^{v}). R. Chazan: *Daggers of Faith*: *Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 8; 16; 57–59; 170–172, and the list of literature provided on the theme 'Messiah'.

[38] R. Chazan: *The Jews of Medieval Western Christendom*, p. 35.

teachings. Thus he uses the correct explanation of the term *haeresis*[39]in St Paul's letter to the Corinthians (1Cor. 11, 19) for his defence of the Talmud. The exegesis of this passage had been the subject of debate amongst Church writers, with different interpretations rendered over the centuries. In the sixteenth century the accepted teaching in the Western Church was based on the fourth-century writings of Augustine where the term had been rendered to mean 'heretics' and was applied to all non-Christian believers. In the fourth century an Eastern Church Father, John Chrysostom, however, rendered it to mean 'factions' having adopted it from a prior philological tradition. The legal consequence of the Augustine view was that all non-Catholic religious believers were considered to be subversives of the Church, and thus subject to prosecution. Reuchlin adopted the term 'factions' without citing his source, and concluded the Christian response should be to perceive non-Catholic believers as an intellectual challenge to be debated rather than as a threat to society. Hence repressive measures such as confiscation of religious texts and the burning of the Talmud were unjust and illegal. These could not be considered effective instruments in defeating a religious aberration. The Church's definition of heresy in the twelfth century,[40] led to deterioration in the traditional relations between the Christian and the Jewish communities.

Reuchlin's dissension was unprecedented and could only be interpreted as provocatation of the theological faculties or that he implicitly tolerated Judaism. He was then confronted with those who disagreed with his opinion and saw it as questioning the divine authority of the Chuch. The first public response was Pfefferkorn's published polemical text the *Handt Spiegel*. It is dedicated to Arnold von Tongern (1468–1540),[41] then professor of theology at Cologne University. He had held several influential positions at the

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[39] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Ciij^{v} = VII^{v}). See also H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 46–47, and notes 59–61.

[40] Peter Biller: 'Heresy and literacy: earlier history of the theme', in P. Biller, and A. Hudson (eds.): *Heresy and Literacy 1000–1530*, pp. 1–18, here pp. 4–6. K.S. Frank: 'Vom Nutzen der Häresie. 1Kor. 11,19 in der frühen patristischen Literatur in Ecclesia militans', in W. Brandmüller (ed.): *Ecclesia militans*: *Studien zur Konzilien- und Reformationsgeschichte*; *Remigius Bäumer zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet*, vol. 1 (Paderborn, 1988), pp. 23–35. For a detailed discussion on the Church's use of the term 'heretic' meaning blasphemer see Leonard W. Levy: *Blasphemy*: *Verbal Offence against the Sacred, from Moses to Salman Rushdie* (New York, 1993), pp. 1–54.

[41] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 29–34. See also James V. Mehl (ed.): *Humanismus in Köln/ Humanism in Cologne. Studien zur Geschichte der Universität zu Köln* (Vienna, 1991), p. 13. See also the entry for 'Arnold v. Tongern', in: *LThK*, vol. 1, col. 896, for some biographical details and a list of his writings.

university. He had been dean of theology and arts and administered the two well funded bursaries for university lectures and as such played an important role in university appointments.[42] He had accused Reuchlin of favouring Jewish books and, what was much more serious, of raising the legal status of the Jews to equal that of Christians. Tongern threatened him with a trial before an Inquisitional tribunal if he did not revoke his arguments.

Reuchlin questions in the *Augenspiegel*[43] how Pfefferkorn obtained knowledge of the contents of the *Ratschlag* or why he was permitted to publish such a text, as he was not among the list of those mandated to examine the submitted reports. Geiger points out that as Pfefferkorn was an official involved in the campaign to confiscate the Jewish books he would legally be informed of the submissions to the commission. He would also be the Archbishop's official messenger to take the submissions to the imperial chancery.[44] However, he may also have been supported by members of theological faculty to ensure he was fully informed of all the results of the submissions. In his pamphlet he made two libellous accusations against Reuchlin, namely, that he had been bribed by Jews and that he failed to understand Hebrew. He also attempted to prove that the content of the *Ratschlag* was contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Pfefferkorn together with the other opponents were later to accuse Reuchlin of having deviated from the original requirements of the mandate. They claimed his opinion was requested only on those Jewish writings considered to be slanderous to the Christian religion. This was of course untrue, but were he to have confined himself only to that specific genre of Jewish literature, he would have been obliged to present a negative opinion and would thus have played into the hands of those who wished to pursue a policy of complete destruction of Jewish writings. He maintains in the *Augenspiegel*,[45] that only those Jewish books considered anti-Christian by the Jews themselves should be confiscated, and no others. Therefore they should continue to be permitted to use the Talmud and he gives his arguments why he came to that conclusion. Hoogstraeten countered these by stating the Talmud had been already condemned by several popes since the thirteenth century, and

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[42] J.V. Mehl (ed.): *Humanism in Cologne*, p. 61.

[43] 'Wie aber der selb myn ratschlag in des yetz gedachten Pfefferkorns oder seins wyblins handt kommen sei/ kan ich noch nit wissen'. (I am as yet unaware how this my counsel came into the said Pfefferkorn's or his wife's hands.) J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aiiij^{r}).

[44] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 241.

[45] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Biij^{r} = III^{r}).

therefore should not be tolerated or included in those books considered as aids to the study of Christian sources. Reuchlin therefore insulted the commands of the papacy and questioned the validity of authoritative theological Biblical exegesis in pleading for its preservation.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE REUCHLIN 'AFFAIR' GOES PUBLIC

Reuchlin's response to Pfefferkorn's public accusations in the *Handt Spiegel* is the *Augenspiegel*. It was a common sixteenth-century polemical reaction to unqualified attacks made on Reuchlin's *Ratschlag*, but it neither adds to nor detracts from his view of Jewish books. The role of Hoogstraeten in pursuing the affair should not be underestimated. His relationship with Pfefferkorn is not fully researched to date, but he apparently supported him in his Jewish conversion campaigns. As Inquisitor General he held a powerful position with complete jurisdiction for the ecclesiastical provinces of Cologne, Mainz, and Trier. His authority extended to ensuring the orthodoxy of the faith and hence to filing legal cases against those considered to have deviated from the Church's teachings. He was also a member of the Dominican Order, one of the mendicant Orders with a tradition in preaching against the spread of what was defined as heresy, particularly Catharism in southern France, and Waldensianism throughout south-eastern Europe. Nevertheless, it is also quite evident that Reuchlin always held the Order in great esteem and recognised its scholarship. His dispute was not with the Dominican Order, as a congregation but with the theological faculty at Cologne University. There is no evidence that the Dominican Order became involved in the controversy prior to 1519 and the Provinical General confirmed that Hoogstraten had acted in the matter of his own accord.[1]

How strongly these traditions of his Order influenced Hoogstraeten or whether he acted out of personal ambition is difficult to discern though the indications are, that in the end it became a personal campaign against Reuchlin and his publication. The Dominican community dominated Cologne's University theological faculty, thereby ensuring the right to teach only those doctrines endorsed and approved by the Church and the Order's superiors. Hoogstraeten therefore required the faculty to examine the *Augenspiegel* for any unorthodox precepts it might contain. Following its deliberation, the faculty concluded that the document encouraged a rejection of the Church's teaching on the legal status of the Jews, by the citing

[1] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 134–139.

of Civil Law sources and ignoring, or not giving due consideration to Canon Law rulings. Furthermore, the faculty declared it was right and proper for the ecclesiastical and Christian princes to confiscate and destroy the Talmud for its defamation of the Christian religion,[2] for 'it was well known that this book blasphemed daily against Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and the Apostles'.

Initially Cologne University, at Hoogstraeten's request, demanded that Reuchlin should withdraw his positive opinion of the Talmud in the *Augenspiegel* and sent him a list of their objections, but he refused to do so and more stridently published an additional pamphlet entitled *Ain clare verstentnus in tütsch vff Doctor Johannsen Reüchlins ratschlag von den iuden büchern* (Tübingen, 1512)[3] which he sold at the Frankfurt spring fair in 1512.[4] He emphasises always that he is a faithful and honest Christian, but continues to defend his positive view of the Talmud, which he says could be used to help convert Jewish believers to Christianity. This remark may have been included to help reduce the charges against him. He also states that neither before nor after the publication of the *Augenspiegel* has he been persuaded, bribed or motivated by any particular wish to redeem the rights or wrongs of the Jewish people.

There then followed a series of letters between Reuchlin and the theological faculty where he tried to mollify them, but without success. From then on the dispute began to escalate.

In March he published his *Defensio* (1513), which he addressed to the Emperor and presented it personally to him while the Emperor was on a court visit to Geislingen.[5] In it he advocates that he has always been a loyal servant of the Church and has never deviated from its teachings. His arguments for the preservation of Jewish books, he says, are all based on Canon Law and he cannot be reproached on this. Reuchlin received no payment for his report on the Hebrew books as he was later to point out. He complained that, on the contrary, instead of receiving payment for this valuable work he is publicly libelled, and requested the Emperor's secretary to intercede

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[2] Ibid., pp. 42–43.

[3] J. Reuchlin: *Ain clare verstentnus in tütsch/ vff Doctor Johannsen Reüchlins ratschlag von den iuden büchern*, ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 196. See also L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 264–266. Also Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemannn: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die Anfänge der christlichen Kabbala', in idem: *Christliche Kabbala* (Stuttgart, 2003), pp. 9–48, here pp. 24–25.

[4] Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 197*, Reuchlin to the theological faculty of Cologne University, pp. 282–284, here p. 284, and note 4.

[5] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 279.

on his behalf to obtain an imperial mandate silencing Pfefferkorn and his supporters from further accusations against him.[6] He now wrote in Latin,[7] which ensured his scripts would be read and debated by humanists who he believed would surely agree with his viewpoint. In presenting the *Defensio* to the Emperor he hoped to obtain an imperial ordinance to silence those writing against him. He points out that the *Ratschlag* had been carried out at the command of the imperial majesty and he had submitted his report, as required, to the imperial commission.[8] He was not to know how others would react to his opinion, and hence he believes he can now call on the Emperor in his defence against his detractors. Following this audience the Emperor issued a command in August 1513 restraining Pfefferkorn and von Tongern, but also Reuchlin from further public debate on the question of the Jewish books.[9] He had expected the prohibition to be more comprehensive and to apply to all adversaries, but the Emperor may have wished to await the outcome of a trial before imposing a complete ban on all parties. Reuchlin now considered he was protected by imperial privilege from legal procedures by the University and thus uses biting invective against the theological faculty and declares them unfit to be called theologians.[10] This can be perceived as a tactical failure on Reuchlin's part, as the conservative faculty of a well-established university were unlikely to accept such an accusation without some consequences, even if only to defend their right to pronounce on matters of faith. Since its foundation in 1388 the university had been granted a number of prebends and bursaries by Pope Boniface IX (1389–1404) and Pope Sixtus IV for its theological staff[11] and hence the faculty was a powerful and influential institute. Reuchlin's conscious public act of defiance could not go without some consequences and thus proceedings were initiated against him.

Hoogstraeten and theological faculty decided in September 1513 that Reuchlin's views should be investigated more searchingly. He was summoned before a tribunal at Mainz in the same year. The court action was delayed by legal objections from the Archbishop of Mainz, Uriel von

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[6] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 177*, Reuchlin to Zyprian von Serntein, pp. 181–185, here p. 182.

[7] Ibid., pp. 272–274.

[8] J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*, ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 207.

[9] Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 216*, Reuchlin to Sebastian Brant, pp. 370–372, and note 7. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 279, and note 4; p. 280, and note 4.

[10] J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*, ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 283.

[11] J.V. Mehl (ed.): *Humanism in Cologne*, pp. 11–12.

Gemmingen, who insisted that proper procedures should be followed so that justice should be seen to be done. When the trial finally took place at Speyer in March 1514, Reuchlin obtained a judgement in his favour, as the court did not declare the *Augenspiegel* heretical nor did it favour Judaism.[12] It now seemed the *Augenspiegel* could continue to be published in future without any restrictions. The costs of the trial were awarded against Hoogstraeten, and he was ordered to refrain from any further public statements on the affair. However, this was not the end of the legal battle, as the theological faculty were dissatisfied with the court's decision and referred the case to a court in Rome. The initial court decision of Speyer was deferred until the Papal Court pronounced its decision. Hoogstraeten tried to use the influence of his religious Order in Rome to ensure a decision in his favour, but the Dominican Order wished to have the debate ended and the case before an Inquisitional court dropped. They threatened to distance themselves from Hoogstraeten should he attempt to pursue the case further.[13]

Meanwhile Reuchlin had also appealed to Rome to obtain confirmation that the Jewish community had at a prior date been granted the privilege of papal protection and that it included all their books.[14] If this document could be obtained it would vindicate his defence of their books. He also hoped a judgement would soon be given in his favour, but in Rome the legal process was to take another seven years before a final decision was made.

The public discussion meanwhile led to more serious writers publishing texts in defence of Reuchlin in 1517. One of the most notable was by Georgius Benignus (1445–1523),[15] a member of the Papal Commission set up by Pope Leo X in July 1516 to examine Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel*. He analysed, in the form of a dialogue, Reuchlin's arguments for the preservation of the Talmud and concluded that instead of Church and State condemning Reuchlin, he should be praised for his scholarship and as an august member of Germany's literati. In the dialogue Benignus debated only on the theological arguments. The legal arguments were not considered. The eccle-

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[12] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 290–303.

[13] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 136. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 305–319.

[14] L. Geiger p. 313, and note 1.

[15] Ibid., pp. 400–402. For a comprehensive account of Benignus/Juraj Dragišić, see Elisabeth Erdmann-Pandžić / Basilius Pandžić; Juraj Dragišić: *Juraj Dragišić und Johannes Reuchlin: eine Untersuchung zum Kampf für die jüdischen Bücher mit einem Nachdruck der Defensio praestantissimi viri Johannes Reuchlin* (1517) *von Georgius Benignus* (*Juraj Dragišić*), (Bamberg, 1989), pp. 103–119. Also H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 79–82.

siastical authorities were only concerned with those aspects of the publication that were relevant to its teachings, whereas the legal references were outside the remit of the commission.

Benignus was, in my view, one of the first to recognise that the document contained Reuchlin's strong theological opinions and he may have wished to debate these rather than the canonical conundrums pertaining to Judaism. As the public debate grew in virulence Reuchlin's true views became distorted, while both opposing parties developed arguments to defend positions that were far removed from his own. This was inevitable, for after he had decided to print and publish the pamphlet, it became no longer a private dispute between him and the theological faculty, but a public affair to be debated by all, and thus it attracted both serious and polemical comments with statements of admiration and condemnation.

Reuchlin's declaration that he published the *Augenspiegel* in defence of his character would appear to be a plausible explanation, were it not for the fact that, as a practising lawyer and doctor of jurisprudence, he was well aware he could have had redress for criminal libel through the courts if he so wished. The salient point of the accusation, that he favoured Judaism to the detriment of Christianity, was false and could have been proven in a court of law. A court case would also have avoided greater public comment on the dispute and restored his intellectual integrity.[16] Yet he chose to vindicate himself not through sterile legal arguments but through the public forum of the printing press.[17] He was determined, therefore, to have the *Augenspiegel* publicised, as is confirmed by the date chosen to launch his publication which was to coincide with the Frankfurt Autumn Fair in 1511. In the prologue to the *Augenspiegel* he explains that he could not wait any longer for him to be given a date for a hearing[18] of his case before

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[16] He suggested to Pfefferkorn that if his accusations were true, 'so möcht er doch den gemainen weg des rechten für genommen/ sich vnd mich darumb vor meinen richter beclagt/ für den er mich allain mit zwaien pfennigen oder iiij. hellern hette mögen für vordern' (then he should have followed the usual legal procedure, and taken a civil action himself against me in a court of law for which he could have demanded at least two pfennicks or four farthings). See prologue of translation in J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (B^r = I^r).

[17] The publication would have involved him in considerable costs, as printing was extremely expensive. Gutenberg's Bible, printed some fifty years earlier, required an advance payment of 800 Gulden, an amount which would have enabled Gutenberg to purchase ten houses in the city of Mainz. Richard Wittmann: *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels* (Munich, 1991), (2nd ed. Munich, 1999), p. 42. See the entry for 'Buchdruck im Mittelalter', in: *LMA*, vol. 2 (1995), cols. 2087–2105.

[18] See J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio ($Aiiij^r$) and translation p. 111.

the Bishop of Augsburg which might have resolved the personal dispute but clearly he wanted to reach a larger readership and stronger support for his views. He elaborates upon the various legal procedures available to him in both ecclesiastical and secular courts but yet does not state why he does not pursue any of them nor is he willing to await the outcome of a trial before publishing his *Augenspiegel*.[19]

The fair took place twice a year. The spring fair was held during the period of Lent, and the autumn fair from the fifteenth of August to the eighth of September. The fair[20] provided an opportune occasion for information on controversial texts to be discussed and distributed. Frankfurt was one of the three major centres for trade in books, after Leipzig and Basle, a place where traders and agents of the great booksellers from all parts of Europe and the Empire would be present to buy and sell their wares and to look for potential material that could be lucrative to print. Booksellers announced their new publications, and copies of a particular book might be bought or sold to agents from widely scattered parts of the Empire. Reuchlin would have been aware that his publication would be discussed and publicised, and thereby reach a wide audience and readership. The crowds made it easy to find a buyer. The fair was also a meeting point for publishers, authors, scholars and equipment sellers. A catalogue of books was made available which was invaluable to agents and scholars, thereby achieving greater sales and wider distribution. Reuchlin points out that he wanted to proceed with a court case against Pfefferkorn, to be heard before the Bishop of Augsburg, but had not received a fixed date for the trial. He stressed that his publication be available for the autumn Frankfurt Book Fair 'so that I may not be regarded by strangers unacquainted with me as a frivolous person, as happened with that baptised Jew, who publicly slandered me at the last fair',[21] and as the date of the fair was drawing near he felt obliged to vindicate his character.[22]

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[19] Ibid., folio (Aiiij^{v}) and translation p. 112.

[20] See Michael Rothmann: *Die Frankfurter Messen im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1998), p. 102. There are several texts on the Frankfurt Book Fair. R. Wittmann provides a good account of the Frankfurt Book Fair in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. See R. Wittmann: *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels*, p. 63. Also Hans Widmann: *Geschichte des Buchhandels vom Altertum bis zur Gegenwart. Neu bearb. und erweitert*, Teil 1 (Wiesbaden, 1952).

[21] 'die weil mir aber bißher kain tag angesetzt worden ist/ da mit ich dan in dißer Franckfurter herbst mesß von frembden leütten die mich nit kennen nit alßo für ainen leichtuertigen man gehalten werde/ wie mich der taufft iud inn nechst verschiner mesß offenlich verunglimpfftt hat'. J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aiiij^{v}). See also J. Schwitalla: *Deutsche Flugschriften 1460–1525*, p. 255.

[22] 'So will ich mich mit ganntzerer warhait gegen mengtlichem verantwurternn/ vnnd alls

Not only did he ensure that his pamphlet would be distributed, but he also wished it to be widely read by lay people and theologians. The text appeared in the vernacular rather than in Latin, the language used for private and intellectual disputes.[23] He justified its use by pointing out that the language of the *Ratschlag* was written in German at the command of both the Emperor Maximilian (1486–1519) and the Archbishop of Mainz, Uriel von Gemmingen (†1514), and he was, therefore, following an already established procedure.[24] As the use of the vernacular was also common in legal texts he may have wished to present his submission as an authoritative document. The court chancelleries pursued a policy of centralising their power through the use of the vernacular, and thus Reuchlin's argument was justified. A more subtle reason and perhaps one which swayed him more than following a precedent, was the fact that Pfefferkorn's pamphlet was also published in German and could therefore be read by the literate, and be presented to the non-literate public.

Reuchlin's prominent status in society both as a scholar and jurist may have led him to believe that a wide audience of educated lawyers, medical doctors, gentry, and aristocrats would support his viewpoint. The desire to reach a wider lay public was the aim of all humanists at this period, and Reuchlin was one of the earliest scholars to present his views in vernacular form prior to the flood of publications that were to follow from 1520 onwards.[25] The cost of a printed booklet would have restricted the number of readers in any case, leaving aside those who were unable to read. To purchase a published text is estimated to have equalled a month's income of a master builder, so that only those with a special interest in the theme and sufficient wealth would be willing to buy it.[26] The subject matter also would have influenced the numbers bought. It was an intellectual topic

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ain verwundter inn anhangender taglaistung mich selber artzneyen vnd hailn'. J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aiiij^{v}). (So I will defend myself against the flood [of accusations] with the complete truth and as the wounded party of the day take my own medicine and cure). See translation p. [Aiiij^{v}].

[23] Ibid., p. 251.

[24] He mentions this in a letter to Konrad Kollin, dated 27th January 1512. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 191*, Reuchlin to Konrad Kollin, pp. 238–246.

[25] L. Febvre gives an indication of this growth. Of the 4,000 works listed as in print, 40 titles were in German in 1521, but by 1522 the number had risen to 211, in 1523 to 344 and by 1525 to 498. See Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Mantu: *The Coming of the Book* (Paris, 1958), *Transl.* by David Gerard (London, 1976), p. 322.

[26] On the prices of books see the article by Karl Stackmann, and Johannes Schilling: 'Die Bibel', in G. Bott: *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 275–292, here p. 275.

and would not have attracted a large readership, unlike devotional publications designed for the edification of spiritual life, or pamphlets dealing with matters of health and manners.[27] Those interested would have been mainly professional theologians and intellectuals attracted to Cabbalistic philosophy.

However, before the pamphlet could appear on the market at the Frankfurt Fair in October 1512 the Emperor Maximilian issued a command prohibiting the sale of the booklet and declared the contents to be injurious to the Christian religion. Thus Reuchlin's pamphlet became a clear-cut example of the first known application of press censorship within the Holy Roman Empire.[28] Fortunately for Reuchlin the ordinance did not have any practical effect, as it was issued too late and the booklet was already on sale. There is no documentary evidence to indicate how vigorously the mandate was enforced.[29] Some copies probably circulated clandestinely in either printed or manuscript form as the notoriety of Reuchlin's case would have created a demand for the text among scholars and other interested readers. It is noteworthy that at a later stage of the controversy, when it had developed into an enquiry as to the orthodoxy of his beliefs, he reverted to Latin, thereby restricting the debate to academics and those directly involved in the dispute, indicating his choice of language was not solely based on the requirements of the Imperial Chancery.[30]

The many legal citations and the fund of Church Fathers' utterances to support his biblical arguments are an indication to his readers that his publication is a serious document, akin to a legal treatise. It was not unknown for lawyers in this era to argue their cases on biblical and Civil Law sources.[31] He

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[27] See Jos. M.M. Hermann: 'Lokale und interregionale Aspekte. Lektüre und Buchmarkt in den nordöstlichen Niederlanden in Spätmittelalter', in Thomas Kock, and Rita Schlusemann (eds.): *Laienlektüre und Buchmarkt im späten Mittelalter* (Frankfurt, 1997), pp. 161–185, here p. 168, and note 26.

[28] See Ulrich Eisenhardt: *Die kaiserliche Aufsicht über Buchdruck, Buchhandel und Presse im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation (1496–1806). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Bücher- und Pressezensur. Studien und Quellen zur Geschichte des deutschen Verfassungsrechts*. Reihe A: Studien 3. (Karlsruhe, 1970), p. 5.

[29] H. Peterse points to the passage in Pfefferkorn's *Beschyrmung* (1516) where mention is made of the mandate forbidding the *Augenspiegel*. It may have been deliberately mentioned so as to have a negative effect on the dissemination of Reuchlin's text. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 32, and note 79.

[30] After the theological faculty at Cologne University became involved in the dispute the official documents and all subsequently published pamphlets appeared only in Latin. See J. Schwitalla: *Deutsche Flugschriften 1460–1525*, p. 256.

[31] M.R. Ackermann: 'Reuchlin und die italienische Rechtswissenschaft', p. 137.

made no demands for the allocation of greater political rights, or requested any alleviation of the restrictions imposed on Jews in their daily lives or in their interactions with Christians. Thus one cannot infer that the *Augenspiegel* was a liberal document defending a minority religious group, though it does show great integrity and independence of mind to defend the Talmud and other Jewish religious texts against bigotry.[32]

[32] Robert S. Wistrich: *Antisemitism*: *The Longest Hatred* (London, 1991), p. 25.

CHAPTER SIX

REUCHLIN—THE CABBALIST

Reuchlin wished to defend Jewish religious writings and their language, but not their religious beliefs or their culture. Their faith was to be left for them to ponder on, and to God's judgement, though he was convinced they erred in remaining outside Christianity. He respected their learning and was determined to acquire a profound knowledge of their language. The study of Hebrew, however, posed considerable difficulty in this era[1] due to the lack of teachers or scholars of the language. Thus learners were dependent on Jewish converts and these were usually treated with suspicion. Many were considered untrustworthy and liable to revert to their old religion at the earliest opportunity. Jewish scholars may have been unwilling to teach Christians a language which was an integral part of their beliefs for fear of it being misappropriated and used in missionary campaigns against them. There were also practical problems, such as the lack of grammar- and printed text books. Manuscripts were available but could only be bought at considerable expense. The difficulty of learning the language was further compounded by the small number of Christians who wished to be instructed. There was little demand to learn the language of a seditious and seductive group, and the study of it by Christians was certain to arouse the suspicion of the ecclesiastical authorities. Those who argued that the Hebrew language was a necessary aid to read the Bible could be denounced by vigilant anti-Jewish elements for attempting to subvert the Church's approved *Vulgate*, the Latin version of the Bible.

Reuchlin, however, unlike many of his contemporary Christian lay people and professional theologians was aware of the shortcomings of the *Vulgate* and the value of Hebrew for the correct translation of the Bible. He makes a profound statement in that he defends the Jewish text of the Bible as being the most accurate.[2] For him it was also proof of Judaism's

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[1] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 108 ff.

[2] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dviij^{v} = XVI^{v}), 'Nun waiß ich kain nacion vff dieser erden die mer achtung hab die hailigen schrifft recht zu schreiben dan die iuden'. (Now I am

faithfulness to the Word of God. Thus he argues strongly against the commonly held accusation that the Jews had deliberately falsified the text of the Bible to confute Christians. That such a statement would lead him into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities was inevitable, for the *Vulgate* Bible was the only orthodox version and no others were permitted for use by Christians. Many of the errors in the *Vulgate* had resulted from transcriptions and the lack of proper proof reading. Thus, a defence of a minority's religion against zealots was not Reuchlin's aim, but the protection of a source of knowledge that was a requisite for the study of the Bible and indispensable for his personal salvation.

He believed that the answers to the mysteries of his religion lay hidden in esoteric texts which would unite man in divine power with God, and for him the Jewish Cabbala was the key to these mysteries. Entrance to this esoteric philosophy could only be gained through a profound knowledge of Hebrew, and serious study of the Talmud with its commentaries. His exegesis of the Bible, in particular the reference in St Paul's Letter to the Romans (3.2) 'the Jews are given the oracles of God' was rendered as confirmation of the importance of the Jewish Cabbala.[3] The elucidation of these mysteries would lead to greater personal holiness, but could only be achieved by acquiring this secret knowledge that Jewish savants possessed, and was hidden in the Cabbala.

Chaim Wirszubski expresses it well when he says: 'Mirandola's statement that the Jews possessed a divinely revealed mystical interpretation of the Law was unheard of in the Christian world at that time and its effect was overpowering'.[4] Arnold of Villanova (ca. 1240) also engaged in letter symbolism and was probably influenced by Jewish Cabbalistic writers of the thirteenth century. Reuchlin adopted letter symbolism in his *Tetragrammaton* following Mirandola's form of Cabbalism, but we cannot know with certainty whether he was influenced by the writings of Villanova. Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico*[5] places him ardently on the side of Mirandola. The Cabbala was the Jacob's ladder, which would bring him to heaven, and it was the

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not aware of any other nation on this earth apart from the Jews who have given more meticulous attention to ensuring that the Bible is copied correctly). See translation p. [Dviij^{r} = XVI^{r}].

[3] The Bible reference appears in W. Trusen: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die Fakultäten', pp. 115–157, here p. 129. See also Lewis W. Spitz: 'Reuchlin's philosophy: Pythagoras and the Cabbala for Christ', in: *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 47 (1956), pp. 1–20.

[4] C. Wirszubski: *Pico DellaMirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 132.

[5] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico* and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century', p. 106.

key to all knowledge.[6] In line with Mirandola's theses he also refers to the magical power of names and the necessity to undergo certain initiation rites in order to perform supernatural works through the Pentagrammaton ISHUH, the word meaning 'Messiah'. In *De verbo mirifico* he endeavours to show how this word can be changed by substitution of the letters to mean the name 'Jesus'. He states clearly in *De verbo mirifico*,

> therefore, what a certain noble philosopher recently proposed at Rome has not seemed unlearned to me, no names in magical and licit operation have the same power as those in Hebrew or those derived from Hebrew, because of all those things these are firstly formed by the voice of God. Yes, that in which nature chiefly practises magic, is the voice of God.[7]

Reuchlin defends Mirandola and apparently accepts that there are magical powers in the Hebrew words of the Cabbala. Furthermore, his method of using the Cabbala to penetrate the literary meaning of the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament was adopted by Reuchlin with enthusiasm.[8] He elaborates at length on the Hebrew term for God 'Yahweh' in the Old Testament. Reuchlin was attracted to the Cabbala from an early stage of his life. An indication of this interest can be deduced from a letter he wrote to Rudolf Agricola in 1484,[9]in which he asks for further information on this Hebrew term, a word he considers, through contemplation, leads to salvation.

The Cabbala had become widespread among Jewish mystics in Spain in the early part of the fifteenth century. The prior restrictive regulations of Cabbalism, introduced to ensure that only the chosen should be admitted to the esoteric teachings, were widened in the Middle Ages, generated by the need of Jewish scholars in the Diaspora. Rabbis felt they required

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[6] '*Per has sacras litteras quasi per scalam Jacob, carmine tangentem coelos*' quoted in the article by Giulio Busi: 'Die Kabbala als eine symbolische Option', in G. Dörner (ed.): *Reuchlin und Italien*, pp. 57–67, here p. 60.

[7] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico* and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century', p. 124.

[8] Mirandola stated in his *Apologia* that the Cabbala 'was a more secret and true interpretation of the law' which he uses, he says, to confirm that the Christian religion is to be found in the Mosaic Law. See W.G. Craven: *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Symbol of his Age*, p. 124.

[9] This analysis was performed prior to his journey to Florence in 1486, and before Mirandola published his theses on the Cabbala. It is further evidence of his early fascination with this form of philosophy. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 13*, Reuchlin to Rudolf Agricola, pp. 47–50, here p. 49, and note 5. For Mirandola and the Tetragrammaton see C. Wirszubski: *Pico DellaMirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, pp. 166–169.

clarification for many aspects of their teachings and, therefore, established major centres of learning in North Africa and Spain in the eleventh century. Explanations and books from these schools spread to France and Germany where they were used by Talmudic scholars. Christian scholars of Hebrew became aware of their existence in their debates with Jewish scholars, and wished to consult them for their potential benefit to Biblical exegesis, but also because some of these esoteric devotees considered these writings to have hidden magical powers to control nature.

Christians had first been introduced to the Cabbala through the mystical works of the theologian Raymond Lull (1232–1316),[10] but it had not become an issue of public debate until Mirandola's publication. Lull's missionary work in Spain and the consequent exposure to Jewish and Islamic philosophies had caused him to postulate a universal mystical theism, based on the power of divine names which could be established by a technique of letter combinations.[11] Lull's teaching on divine names had a long tradition in the Church. Origen's (185–214) writings contained references to the powerful magic of Hebrew words and names which would have appealed to his personal esoteric beliefs.[12] He was one of the most profound writers of the early Greek Church. His concept of theology divided Christians into two types, those who based their faith on an acceptance of the literary truths given in Scripture and the interpretation by the Church, and those who sought a deeper meaning in the Bible and tradition. He was also a scholar of Hebrew[13] which for Reuchlin indicated his works were likely to contain some of the esoteric philosophy hidden in Jewish texts. Reuchlin would also have admired him as an assiduous commentator and as an early translator of the Hebrew Bible. The technique of letter combinations was a method also found in Gikatilla's *Hortus Nucis* which Reuchlin had been presented with in 1486.[14] He adopted the same method in his *De verbo mirifico*. The aim of this work he points out is:

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[10] F.A. Yates: *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*, pp. 9–17; p. 24. Also F.A. Yates: *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, p. 96. See also the entry for 'Lull' in: *TRE*, vol. 21, pp. 500–506.

[11] F.A. Yates: *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*, p. 24.

[12] On the magical power of Hebrew words and names see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 206*, Reuchlin to Jakob Lemp, pp. 318–332, here p. 330, and note 51. J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dv^r = $XIII^r$).

[13] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 138*, Reuchlin to Dionysius Reuchlin, pp. 33–55, here p. 51, and note 54.

[14] On Gikatilla, see note 1, p. 39 in Commentary.

> to examine the occult property names and the secret power of words used by men in ancient times in the performance of sacred rites; to correct erroneous conceptions concerning the marvellous effects of mysteries; and in this way, to choose the name which is supreme and most powerful in the performance of wonders.[15]

Thus, this Cabbalistic work considers magical practices and the secret power of words, and indicates Reuchlin's early occupation with esoteric forms of belief in the supernatural power of names. The occultism presented in it was perceived to be a spiritual form of magic whereby man could partake of the divine power[16] and it became the basis of Reuchlin's religious thinking. Its publication before his *Ratschlag* and *Augenspiegel* suggests that his view of Jewish religious books was already formed before being requested to present an expert opinion on them. Today Reuchlin's Cabbalistic works are considered to be the first erudite study of Jewish Cabbalism by a Christian and are a major contribution to Hebrew literature in Europe.[17] Why Reuchlin should have been particularly attracted to mysticism as a form of belief is a question which will remain unanswered, but it is known that in his formative years he was very receptive to the works of Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), who had an important influence on him.[18] Cusa adopted Raymond Lull's esoteric philosophy into his writings.[19] He wrote a number of mystical works and carried out missionary campaigns against Jews and Muslims. He attended the Council of Vienne (1311–1312) where he supported the proposal to introduce the teaching of Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldean at the universities of Bologna, Oxford, Paris and Salamanca.

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[15] See Charles Zika: '*De verbo mirifico* and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century', p. 126. On the printing and dedication of this major work see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 64*, Reuchlin to Johannes von Dalberg, pp. 197–203, here pp. 201–202, and notes 1–2.

[16] 'that we ourselves are producers of marvellous works above human power, and although at the same time constituted in nature, we hold dominion over it, and work wonders, portents and miracles which are signs of the divinity by one name, which I have been eager to explain to you' quoted in C. Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico* and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century', p. 111. See also L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, p. 495.

[17] See K. Grözinger: 'Reuchlin und die Kabbala', p. 175.

[18] H. Rupprich: 'Johann Reuchlin im europäischen Humanismus', p. 12, and note 3. In Geiger's biography of Reuchlin there is no reference to Cusa's influence. This relationship with Cusa awaits further study, but some initial work has been done by F. Nagel. Fritz Nagel: 'Johann Reuchlin und Nicolaus Cusanus', in: *Pforzheimer Geschichtsblätter*, 4 (1976), pp. 133–157. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 227*, Reuchlin to Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples, pp. 419–427, here p. 424, and note 2.

[19] See the entry for 'Raimund Lull(us)' in: *LThK*, vol. 8, cols. 974–976.

In his *De quaerendo Deum* Cusa says, 'Man came into the world to seek God'. Cusa also taught a theology of Divine Names[20] and his writings indicate a form of mysticism found in the philosophy of the ancient Greeks. Reuchlin appears to have gleaned his first knowledge of Cusa's writings while studying at Paris in 1477.[21] It is also known that he provided editorial advice to the French humanist Jacobus Faber Stapulensis (Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples, 1450–1536) in the compilation of Cusa's complete works in 1514, and was obviously considered an authority on Cusa's writings.[22] Reuchlin's vision of achieving salvation and divine power through a mystical theology was in accordance with part of Cusa's teachings.[23] Much of his work on the power of names, especially the *Tetragrammaton*, and 'Yahweh' in *De verbo mirifico* (1494) appears to have been based on Cusa's writings.[24] In his later work *De arte cabalistica* (1517) he praises Cusa and quoted profusely from Cusa's 'Learned Ignorance' (*Docta ignorantia*, 1440) using Cusa's conception of how man could participate in God and why man's reason (*ratio*) cannot comprehend Him. Among the numerous scripts which Reuchlin is known to have possessed is one by Cusa that discusses the authority of the Pope and dissidence within the Church.[25] Dissension in religious matters or on the power of the Papacy was legitimate Cusa claimed, but should never lead to a defection or destruction of the Church's unity. In a further major work 'On peace of faith' (*De pace fidei*, 1453),[26] he elaborated on this theme and pointed out that the Church is the Body of Christ, and whoever separates from it separates himself from Christ.[27] The unified Christian Body, however, permits 'a religion with various rites' (*religio una in rituum varietate*)[28]

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[20] W. Schmidt-Biggemannn: 'Johannes Reuchlin und die Anfänge der christlichen Kabbala', pp. 19–22.

[21] H. Rupprich: 'Johannes Reuchlin im europäischen Humanismus', p. 12.

[22] See the request to Reuchlin on whether he would make available his manuscripts on Cusa to Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples for study. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 159*, Beatus Rhenanus to Reuchlin, pp. 117–125.

[23] Siegfried Raeder: 'Reuchlin' in: Martin Greschat (ed.): *Gestalten der Kirchengeschichte*, vol. 5: Die Reformationszeit (Stuttgart, 1981), pp. 33–51, here p. 36.

[24] On Reuchlin's attempts to explain the power of names by way of his Cabbalistic philosophy see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 64*, Reuchlin to Rudolf Agricola, pp. 47–50, here p. 49, and note 5.

[25] This was a letter to the Castilian ambassador Rodrigo Sanchez de Arevola where he suggests that obedience to the Pope extended only insofar as the Pontiff acted in accordance with the teachings of the Fathers and within the precepts of Canon Law. F. Nagel: 'Johann Reuchlin und Nicolaus Cusanus', p. 134.

[26] H. Rupprich: 'Johannes Reuchlin im europäischen Humanismus', p. 17, and p. 30.

[27] Ibid., p. 142, and note 39.

[28] Ibid., p. 142, and note 43.

suggesting that diverse approaches to Christianity are permissible and extending his views to write that truth of the Gospels could be found not alone in the Bible but also found in the Koran.[29] For Reuchlin this dictum confirmed that the path he had chosen to seek God through texts of the Cabbala was legitimate.[30] Cusa's philosophy of tolerance is similar to Lull's in that he also proposes a universal theism. He maintains all religions are equal in their search for the goodness of God, and hence can be unified in honouring Him within the Christian Church. Cusa, however, was not devoid of the prejudices towards Judaism. As Papal Legate he issued ordinances requiring Jews to wear yellow rings on their clothing in the cities of Bamberg and Minden, so that they would be readily identifiable in any interactions with Christians. He succeeded in having these regulations adopted at the synod of Mainz in 1452, and they were later implemented in several other imperial cities.[31]

Further evidence of Cusa's influence is evident in Reuchlin's application of the word 'sect' in the *Augenspiegel* to describe different religious groups including Christians. This led to the accusation that Reuchlin used a pejorative term to describe the Christian religion, thereby suggesting that both Judaism and Christianity were beliefs of equal status. Cusa, however, uses the same term to define two Christian communities of believers in his *De pace fidei.* Reuchlin was well acquainted with this work and it may have suggested to him that it could be used therefore in the same manner with impunity.[32] *De pace fidei* was set out in the form of a dialogue in which disputants from seventeen nations discuss their respective religions and rituals. A scene of the dialogue involves a discourse between a Jew, a Muslim and a Christian on the merits of their religions. Reuchlin applied this method of dialogue in both of his Cabbalistic works. In *De verbo mirifico*, and *De arte cabalistica* (1517), the disputants of contrary religions are convinced by debate of the superiority of the Christian faith, and are indicative of Reuchlin's view that dialogue is the means whereby those of different

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[29] Jasper. Hopkins: *Nicolas of Cusa's De pace fidei and Cribatio Alkorani. Translation and Analysis*, (Minneapolis, 1994), p. 11.

[30] F. Nagel: 'Johann Reuchlin und Nicolaus Cusanus', p. 148. G. Scholem has identified Reuchlin's philosophical discourse on the terms 'is' and 'nothing' in *De arte cabalistica*, as also derived from Cusa's writings. Gershom G. Scholem: *Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbalah* (Berlin, 1962), p. 375.

[31] See here A. Herzig: 'Die Juden in Deutschland zur Zeit Reuchlins', p. 13.

[32] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Biij^{r} = III^{r}). H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 122, and note 11.

religions can be converted. Cusa was a great admirer of the learned Cardinal Bessarion (ca. 1403–1472). His library[33] in Venice contained several works on Hermeticism. These two high-ranking Church officials adopted a belief designed to harmonise the pagan philosophy of the civilisations of antiquity with Christianity. The pursuit of that philosophy by such eminent churchmen was sufficient proof for Reuchlin of the orthodoxy of his studies of the Cabbala.

In *De arte cabalistica* Reuchlin states he also wished to bring Pythagoras's philosophy to the Germans, just as Marsilio Ficino had done with Plato for the Italians. He highlights the importance of Cabbalism by maintaining Pythagoras's philosophy was based on Cabbalistic teachings of the Jews, and he was greatly attracted to Pythagoras's speculative number philosophy which he later applied in his Cabbalistic studies. In 1495 Reuchlin wrote to the 'Hochmeister' (Chief Rabbi) at Regensburg, Jakob Margolioth (Margolioth, †1499–1512), in an attempt to obtain books on the Cabbala, but Margolioth was unable to fulfil his request, and furthermore advised him to desist from further Cabbalistic studies.[34] Reuchlin pursued his studies of the Cabbala, being convinced by his private study not only of Hebrew but also of Greek and Latin authors that there was a divine philosophy to be found in antiquity, which would reveal to the initiated the mysteries of religion.

Interest in this form of esoteric philosophy had a long tradition among Christian scholars as it was believed that Jewish and Greek philosophical sources held the key to the mysteries of the Christian religion. Its roots lay in the search for the pristine theology (*Prisca Theologia*) of the early Church Fathers such as Lactantius (†317),[35] Clement of Alexandria

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[33] The library contained over 1024 titles when it was donated to the Republic of Venice in 1468. See C. Gilly (ed.): *Magic, Alchemy and Science from Fifteenth-Eighteenth-Centuries*, p. 126.

[34] M. Dall'Asta points out that there is no evidence of whether Cabbalistic books were available in Regensburg at the time, or whether Margolioth was following the command of the Talmud which forbids the teaching of the Cabbala to non-Jews. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 62*, Jakob Margolioth to Reuchlin, pp. 192–195.

[35] Lactantius's work was reprinted in Rome 1468 and again in 1470 with a preface by one of the Church's high officals, Andrea Bussi, Bishop of Aleri and friend of Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa. In his works Lactantius maintains there is no difference between the Hermetic and Christian idea of God. See R. van den Broek: *From Poimandres to Jacob Böhme*: *Gnosis, Hermeticism, and the Christian Tradition*, p. 143. Marino Zorzi: 'Hermes Trismegistus in the Venetian Libraries', in C. Gilly (ed.): *Magic, Alchemy and Science Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries*, pp. 126–134, here p. 126.

(140/150–215/216) and Eusebius (265–339),[36] writers of the third and fourth centuries. These were said to have used ancient texts to prove the superiority of Christianity in their discourses and conversion attempts with pagans.[37] Eusebius's *Praeparatio evangelica* was the main source of *prisca theologia* for many humanist scholars. In this work he maintains that the ancient Greeks obtained their philosophy and theology from an earlier philosophy of the Hebrews, and that Plato's works were based on Moses' teachings. Reuchlin was well versed in such works as the Pythagorean 'Golden verses' (*Carmen aureum*)[38] and *Aurea verba et symbola*. Many of these texts on magic and mystery by authors such as Iamblichus, Plato, Porphyry, Orpheus and Pythagoras were translated into Latin by Marsilio Ficino, and printed in Venice by Aldus Manutius in 1494. He would have been aware of them while on his visit to Florence.[39] He possessed a copy of Ammonius Hermeae's 'Commentary on Porphyry', published in Venice in 1500. He also possessed one of Porphyry's manuscripts, probably *De abstinentia*, though no record exists of it in his library. However, in *De arte cabalistica* he quotes profusely from it.[40] The Cabbala, therefore, was considered to be part of that tradition of esoteric philosophy and to be divinely inspired, and hence worthy of research by scholars in their attempts to find the true sources of their religion and universal concord. These Christians both lay and clerical who

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[36] See Charles Zika: *Reuchlin und die okkulte Tradition der Renaissance* (Sigmaringen, 1998), pp. 132–158.

[37] See Thomas Leinkauf: 'Reuchlin und der Florentiner Neuplatonismus', in: Gerald Dörner (ed.): *Reuchlin und Italien* (Stuttgart, 1999), pp. 109–132, here p. 115, and note 23.

[38] See the English and Greek edition: Pythagoras: *The Pythagorean Golden Verses*: *with Introduction and Commentary* by Johan C. Thom, (Leiden, 1994), especially pp. 174–177, and pp. 210–212.

[39] Antonie Faivre: 'Renaissance Hermeticism and the concept of western esotericism', in Roelof van den Broek, and Wouter J. Hanegraaff (eds.): *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (Albany, 1998), pp. 109–123. Heinz Scheible: 'Reuchlins Einfluss auf Melanchthon', in: Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 123–149, here p. 141. Valery Rees: 'Marsilio Ficino Renaissance Man', in: *History Today*, 7, 49 (1999), pp. 45–51. C. Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico* and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century', pp. 112–134. Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica*: *Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*, pp. 36–37. A. Löw: *Hermes Trismegistos als Zeuge der Wahrheit*, pp. 41–46. Peter Kinsley: 'Poimandres: The etymology of the name and the origins of the Hermetica', in: R. van den Broek: *From Poimandres to Jacob Böhme*: *Gnosis, Hermeticism, and the Christian Tradition*, pp. 41–77. C. Gilly (ed.): *Magic, Alchemy and Science Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries*, p. 128.

[40] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 151*, Reuchlin to Mutianus Rufus, pp. 93–96, here p. 96, and note 11. Idem., vol. 1, *Letter 116*, Aldo Manuzio to Reuchlin, pp. 366–372, here p. 369, and note 17. See also K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 81.

pursued a scholary interest not only in the esoteric writings of classical authors but also in Cabbalistic authors became known as 'Christian Cabbalists'. Reuchlin who was primarily motivated by his personal search for salvation became the foremost among them. His study of Hebrew caused him to include the rabbinical texts in his Cabbalistic readings, and as a means to study and interpret the Scriptures.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REUCHLIN—AN INTELLECTUAL OF HIS TIME

Reuchlin lived in an era of strong oral culture whose influence can never be known with certainty, but which he accepted, as is evidenced by the credence he gives to the manner of transfer of the secret knowledge of the Cabbala. The powerful magic associated with it was not uncommon, as many humanists[1] were attracted to forms of esoteric belief. For him and others who sought God through mysticism, it seemed that many of the ceremonies and sacred rites of the Catholic Church were in analogy with those of pre-Christian worshippers. The singing of hymns, the acts of prostration and the requirement of faith in the performance of rituals were all part of a tradition not exclusive to the Church, as his reading of classical literature would have indicated.[2] Following the death of his benefactor Count (later Duke) Eberhard im Bart (1445–1496), Reuchlin was forced to flee Württemberg. His position had become untenable due to his involvement in a legal case in 1488 that had resulted in the advisor to Eberhard's successor, the Augustinian monk Konrad Holzinger, being imprisoned. In the newly changed political constellation at court and Reuchlin's personal differences with Eberhard's successor, his position there became precarious. He fled to Heidelberg in Febraury 1496, and joined the literary circle of Johann von Dalberg (1455–1503),[3] known as 'The Rhenish Literary Sodality' (*Sodalitas litteraria Rhenana*).[4] The members were intent upon encouraging

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[1] Lewis W. Spitz: *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 168. K. Thomas: *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p. 28.

[2] D.P. Walker: *The Ancient Theology*: *Studies in Christian Platonism*, p. 17.

[3] See H. Rupprich: 'Johannes Reuchlin im europäischen Humanismus', p. 18. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 72, and note 296. K. Grözinger: 'Reuchlin und die Kabbala', pp. 175–187. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 41–45.

[4] Martina Backes: *Das literarische Leben am kurpfälzischen Hof zu Heidelberg im 15. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1992), pp. 198–170, provides a detailed study of the literary life at the court in Heidelberg during the period of Reuchlin's stay. On the settting up of the *Sodalitas litteraria Rhenana* see idem., p. 52. On the the members of the Sodality see the article by Klaus Arnold: 'Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516)', in: *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Bistums und Hochstifts Würzburg*, vol. 23 (Würzburg, 1991), pp. 81–102. On the court at Heidelberg see the article by Henry J. Cohn: 'The Early Renaissance Court of Heidelberg', in: *European Studies Review*, 1 (1971), pp. 295–322.

the study of classical texts. Dalberg had invited him to move to Heidelberg, and offered a position of librarian at the bishop's library. Reuchlin was an excellent linguist, and in addition to the three classical languages spoke French and Italian.[5] During his stay at Heidelberg he composed a three act play in Latin in which he ridiculed the trade in relics. His patron was reluctant to have it performed as it was also an indirect criticism of Holzinger, the official who played a major role in Reuchlin's forced departure from the Duchy of Württemberg.[6] As a bishop of the Church, and thus an official administrator, Dalberg may have been unwilling to expose or compromise himself as a member of an esoteric movement or seen to condone criticism of a cleric.

During this period Reuchlin translated several Greek texts, wrote satirical Latin prose and comedy plays for the intellectual enjoyment of the Sodality members.[7] He also hoped to be able to lecture in Hebrew at the University of Heidelberg, but was prevented due to the opposition of the monks at the university.[8] It was known that some members of the Sodality were particularly interested in Christian magic[9] and frequent visits were made to the Benedictine Abbey at Sponheim where the abbot, Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516)[10] professed himself to be a defender of "natural" magic. In his *Steganographia*,[11] a work on angelic powers, he claims that magic did not originate in man, but is to be found in the Book of Revelation.

Whether Reuchlin accepted that treatise is unknown, but its esoteric content would have appealed to him. To what extent Reuchlin's preoccupation with the Cabbala was concerned with its magical elements will never be established with certainty, but his two Cabbalistic works strongly suggest he believed in some form of divine magic operated by angelic agents.

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[5] See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 89*, Rutger Sycamber to Reuchlin, pp. 290–299, here p. 294, and note 9.

[6] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 78–81. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 102*, Sebastian Brant to Reuchlin, pp. 328–331, here p. 330, and note 4.

[7] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 79–92.

[8] Ibid., 'Due to the fury of the monks', p. 45.

[9] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy', p. 239. Also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 89*, Rutger Sycamber to Reuchlin, pp. 290–299, here p. 294, and note 6.

[10] He occupied himself with 'a secret language and with hidden meanings'. K. Arnold, 'Johannes Trithemius', pp. 83–87. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 42–44.

[11] M. Backes: '*Das literarische Leben am kurpfälzischen Hof zu Heidelberg im 15. Jahrhundert*', pp. 156–158. L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, p. 524. The work was placed on the Church's Index of Forbidden Books. See Paola Zambelli, *White Magic, Black Magic in the European Renaissance*: *From Ficino, Pico, Della Porta to Trithemius, Agrippa, Bruno* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 75–100.

His tutor and model Mirandola[12] had also written on practical magic and Reuchlin would have been aware of this. He never commits himself, however, by stating openly that initiated Christians could influence these angelic powers to perform supernatural acts. This is cautiously left for the reader to decide. He clearly differentiates between his form of ancient and sacrosanct magic based on the *Prisci Magi*, and that of his contemporaries which was both perilous and sacrilegious.[13] His form of Christian magic required the knowledge hidden in the Cabbala for the invocation of the angelic powers and this could only be achieved by the initiated using complicated laws and letter combinations[14] that he had introduced in his *De verbo mirifico* and elaborated on in *De arte cabalistica*.

Examples of this magic in the past were the Christian miracles,[15] whose mode of operation was part of the tradition of obscure knowledge to be found in the Cabbala. It was also to be found in the secret salvation philosophy of Christian Gnostics in the early Church and said to be based on the spoken teachings of Jesus, and like the Cabbala, transmitted by oral tradition.[16] Furthermore, his exegetical studies of the Scriptures, in particular the reference to the granting of the secret and hidden wisdom of God to the mature (1 Cor. 2, 6–8), was sufficient evidence that there were mystical elements of God which, if understood, would lead to unity with the divinity and ultimately to salvation.

The destruction of Jewish literature would have meant a loss of esoteric texts and with them the essential secret knowledge whereby a Christian could obtain a closer relationship to God. The protection of that knowledge was in the interest of Christianity, but it was not a defence of Jewish culture. For him Jewish literature derived its value not from its literary content,

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[12] Moshe Idel: 'The magical and neo-Platonic interpretations of the Kabbalah', in Bernard Dov Cooperman (ed.): *Jewish thought in the sixteenth century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), p. 202.

[13] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy', p. 237.

[14] There are three Cabbalistic linguistic techniques used by students of the Cabbala namely: the 'Gematria' where numerical values are assigned to each letter of the Hebrew alphabet; the 'Notarikon' where letters of one word form the beginning of others, and the 'Temurah', an anagrammatical system where the letters of a word are substituted by others according to defined rules. Reuchlin is known to have used all three methods in his *De arte cabalistica* in 1494. See Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica*: *Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*, p. 22. See also, D. Price: *Campaign to destroy Jewish books*, pp. 87–94.

[15] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy', p. 237.

[16] See here David Christie-Murray: *A History of Heresy* (London, 1976), (repr. Guernsey, 1990), pp. 21–32, here p. 22.

but from its religious mysticism, and hence his defence extended only to those works sanctioned by law and beneficial to Christians. His tolerance of Judaism was doubtless subordinate to his search for holiness, but inseparable from it.

In his *Tütsch Missiue*[17] he presented theological arguments as to why the Jews persisted in their erroneous beliefs, though their savants were aware of the falsity of Judaism. He says they were unable to recognise their collective guilt as sinful, caused by their long stay in 'the misery of exile',[18] and hence fail to perform penance necessary to enter Christianity. He refers to the Cabbala and how it proves the truth of Christian beliefs, but he says the Jews were excluded from this knowledge due to their long years in exile; not having their prophets to guide them, they are blind to their sinfulness, as it states in the Book of Isaiah 6, 8–11. The text contains several citations in Hebrew and indicates that it was also intended as a missionary pamphlet directed at the Jews, but further research is required to provide more substantial evidence on this point. Only Jews educated and initiated into the Cabbala ('vnnd das kan allein der gelert iud verston der in der heimlichen kunst geübt vnd erfarn ist, genannt Cabala')[19] could find Christianity and avoid God's eternal judgement. He offered to instruct those interested in finding their way through the secrets of this philosophy,[20] and if necessary with the aid of their own religious literature. According to his understanding of the transmission of the Cabbala, Jewish savants were originally initiated into the secret knowledge of divine magic, but they misinterpreted it and hence became victims of God's punishment. Subsequent generations of Jews inherited this misinterpretation and would therefore remain outside God's Kingdom unless they rediscovered their error and entered the Christian faith.

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[17] J. Reuchlin: *Tütsch missiue*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 8. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 15–22.

[18] His view was based on a similar argument used by the Spanish Dominican monk Alfonsus Bonihominis († 12.8.1353) who wrote, in a commentary on an eleventh-century Arabic letter, that the Jews remained in exile because they refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah. H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 29. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 19. H.A. Oberman: *Wurzeln des Antisemitismus*, p. 34.

[19] See J. Reuchlin: *Tütsch missiue*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 8. My translation. See also H.A. Oberman: *Wurzeln des Antisemitismus*, p. 35.

[20] They could avoid God's final judgement only through use of Cabbalistic mysticism. H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 184, and note 260, and p. 185.

For a Christian to enter into the symbolism of the Cabbala, however, it was crucial to have access to the Hebrew literature of Jewish savants. The campaigns of Pfefferkorn and his fellow anti-Semitics were therefore to be strongly resisted to prevent that knowledge being permanently lost. The Jews were to be tolerated, as law-abiding co-residents within the Holy Roman Empire even if they misinterpreted their religion and wrongly believed in it. They were to be tolerated until such time as they saw the error of their beliefs and embraced the Christian faith.

For Christians initiated into the Cabbala, however, there was an obligation to find true answers to questions of their faith. Such an approach to religion was unorthodox, for it meant using Jewish sources and cast doubt on the authoritative teaching of the Church. Reuchlin, however, considered his philosophy and religious practice as a method of reform to reinvigorate the Church, and to provide a model of direction for those Renaissance scholars who queried the dogmatism of the Catholic Church and the excessive forms of popular piety.[21] His philosophy resembles more Mirandola's doctrine of freedom of the individual. He believes he should have the liberty to pursue independent inquiry[22] and to find a theology for his own salvation. Unlike Luther's theology,[23] Reuchlin's unstructured philosophy was restricted to the educated elite. Only the Christian Hebraist initiated into the Cabbala could partake of this philosophy and it was never envisaged to be a popular movement. The reorientation, which he propounded, should come from within the Church, in accordance with Cusa's stipulation.

Despite his awareness of the deficiencies of the Catholic Church, and the adverse response to the *Augenspiegel*, he never contemplated disassociation from the Church or posited a challenge to its legitimacy, though he ridiculed the excesses of popular veneration and castigated the clergy for their ignorance and inability to study the Bible texts in their original languages.[24] Like all humanists of his day he strongly criticised the quarrels that were taking place between the various religious Orders on doctrinal issues which were irrelevant to the spiritual well-being of the people and were in reality disguised debates on gaining power, privilege and

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[21] C. Zika: 'Reuchlin and Erasmus: Humanism and Occult Philosophy', p. 240.

[22] W.G. Craven: *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Symbol of his Age*, p. 13.

[23] Stefan Rhein: 'Martin Luther', in Hans-Peter Becht (ed.): *Johannes Reuchlin Phorcensis*, pp. 58–59.

[24] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio ($C^r = V^r$).

influence. He refers to the debate whether St Paul had been married or not.[25] The answer was of major significance to those who wished to end the celibate status of the priesthood. The question had been debated for centuries by scholars without any agreed consensus. The status of celibacy had become a theme of particular interest to reform humanists as criticism of the clergy's immoral behaviour increased, but also as many writers throughout the Late Middle Ages questioned whether marriage or a monastic life was the Christian ideal. The resolving of the question was given more emphasis during this period, for scholars, in their studies of Augustine's writings, found references to his marriage and to his concubines.[26] Thus theologians were confronted with reconciling Augustine's marriage with his monastic life.

The other major divisive debate was on the Immaculate Conception and the birth of Jesus Christ.[27] The seemingly unnatural event had occupied theologians since the Council of Ephesus (431) in their attempts to present a dogma to the laity that was contrary to the laws of nature. In an attempt to refute Jewish criticism of the worship of the Virgin Mary a Dominican professor of theology, Franz von Retz (ca. 1343–1427)[28] wrote a defence where he assembled references to the virginity of Mary from various texts including the Old Testament, and examples from the animal world as proof that Mary had given birth to Jesus without losing her virginity. It was published at Speyer in 1485 and Reuchlin would have been acquainted with its contents, though there is no evidence that he actually read it. Two of the major religious Orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, also became involved in a serious dispute as to whether the Virgin Mary had been conceived with or without Original sin. The Dominicans claimed she was not devoid of the sin, but in the view of the Franciscans, as taught by Dun Scotus, she could not have been inflicted with sin and thus was due to greater veneration than any of the other church saints. The level of worship therefore became an

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[25] Ibid., folio (Eiij^{v} = XIX^{v}).

[26] Ibid., folio (Eiij^{v} = XIX^{v}). See the entry for 'Augustinus' in: *TRE*, vol. 4, pp. 691–721, where there is a reference to St Paul's concubines and to his marriage. See the entry for 'Erasmus and the marriage debate' in: *TRE*, vol. 9, pp. 336–337. Ursula Rautenberg (ed.): *Über die Ehe*: *Von der Sachehe zur Liebesheirat* (Schweinfurt, 1993), pp. 45–86.

[27] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Eiij^{v} = XIX^{v}). Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 128*, Petrus Siber to Reuchlin, pp. 398–401, here pp. 399–400, and note 1.

[28] See the entry for 'Franz v. Retz' in: *LThK*, vol. 4, cols. 243–244. Also the entry for 'Franz v. Retz' in: *Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Ruhe (1980) vol. 2, col. 834. Also the article by Hartmut Boockmann: 'Kirche und Frömmigkeit vor der Reformation', in G. Bott (ed.): *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 41–72, here p. 44.

issue between the two religious Orders in the fifteenth century. Reuchlin was very well acquainted with the debate as he had provided legal advice to a Dominican who had become involved in litigation arising from defamatory accusations made by some Franciscans against the Dominicans. The theme became such a contentious issue between the two Orders that there were allegations of even murder made against the opposing side. The theology faculty at Cologne had adopted the teaching of the Immaculate Conception in 1496.[29] John of Segovia (+ after 1456) tried to have this teaching on the Virgin Mary declared a dogma at the Council of Basle, but was unsuccessful.[30]

In all of these debates the religious Orders played a dominant role as defenders of what was considered to be precepts of the Church's teaching. Reuchlin's public criticism of them for their vacuous debates therefore could not have endeared him with the Dominicans in Cologne and they intensified their response.

Reuchlin's form of esoteric belief had more in common with the mystical faith of such Christian authors as Lull and Tauler (ca. 1300–1361)[31] and was incompatible with Luther's theology, which granted that faith and God's grace alone were sufficient for salvation.[32] Hence he would never have entertained Luther's teaching or his exposition of the Bible or joined him in his attempts to reform the Church. Reuchlin's philosophy of considering the Jews as opponents in religion but co-residents in the Empire may be compared with Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms of God and man,[33] but they held widely divergent doctrinal differences on the theology of salvation. In his support of Reuchlin, Luther emphasised Reuchlin's freedom to express his views on matters which he considered were non-religious, and

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[29] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 78.

[30] See Peter Dinzelbacher: *Bernhard von Clairvaux. Leben und Werk des berühmten Zisterziensers* (Darmstadt, 1998), pp. 71–75. Dieter Koepplin: 'Reformation der Glaubensbilder: Das Erlösungswerk Christi auf Bildern des Spätmittelalters und der Reformationszeit', in G. Bott: *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 333–378.

[31] On Johannes Tauler's mystical works see the entry for 'Johannes Tauler' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 1089–1091.

[32] Contemporary pamphlets, however, portrayed him in woodcuts with M. Luther, suggesting an affinity in their demands for freedom and as pioneers of the Reformation. Heiko A. Oberman, 'Johannes Reuchlin: Von Judenknechten zu Judenrechten', in: Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 39–64, here p. 39.

[33] On this point see the article by Heiko A. Oberman: 'Three sixteenth-century attitudes to Judaism: Reuchlin, Erasmus and Luther', in B.D. Cooperman (ed.): *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 334.

thus outside the remit of the Church's authority.[34] He could not comment on the affair concerning the Jewish books as such, but said that there was nothing in Reuchlin's works for which he could be condemned by the Church.[35] In a letter to Reuchlin in 1518 he congratulates him on (initially) winning his case, but he did not indicate any approval of Reuchlin's view of the Talmud or of the Cabbala.

Reuchlin's close family relations to Melanchthon would appear to place him within the sphere of influence of the new religious movement then growing in Wittenberg in the eastern part of the German area. This speculation however would not be in accordance with his character. Reuchlin belonged to the scholarly, but widely scattered group of intellectuals known as humanists, but he was by no means a radical of the genre normally associated with the major figures of the Reformation.

Throughout his life he remained a strong adherent to the Catholic Church despite his dispute with the church authorities. An indication of this is his membership of the Salve Regina Brotherhood,[36] an organisation with a particular devotion to the Virgin Mary. There he is listed as one of the ordained priests (*sacerdotes*). It is not recorded when he became a priest, but probably some time after the death of his second wife in 1519. For some years prior to her death he had become a member of other lay religious Orders that met regularly for prayer readings. Thus he followed a lifestyle of a pious thinker. His decision to take Holy Orders at the end of his life can be seen as his full commitment to the Catholic Church.

Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel* can be seen as an individual's local response to the conflicting policies adopted by the Church in a period when it believed it was under threat from political and religious change. His defence of the Talmud, however, did not derive from any far-sighted liberal view of the Church's mistaken policy on Judaism, but from his personal efforts to obtain divine favour through the mysticism of the Cabbala.[37] He is convinced as firmly as his opponents that there were Jews who committed the crimes they were commonly suspected of, such as usury, adultery, manslaughter, and fraud. If any were convicted of such transgressions they should, after

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[34] E. Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 26–28; 162–164.

[35] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 68.

[36] Hansmartin Decker-Hauff: 'Bausteine zur Reuchlin-Biographie', pp. 101–102.

[37] Stefan Rhein discusses Reuchlin's theology, but he considers his respect for the early Christian writers and his philological study of the Bible as being the central influence on his theology. Stefan Rhein (ed.): *Melanchthonpreis*: *Beiträge zur ersten Verleihung 1988* (Sigmaringen, 1988), pp. 63–66.

due process of law, be punished by banishment from the Empire, and their books, if found to be blasphemous, slanderous, or heretical or used to teach the forbidden arts were to be confiscated and placed in the custody of Christian libraries.[38] Clearly he did not wish to correct any mistaken views of Judaism held by the majority of his fellow Christians nor raise their status within the German speaking areas of the Empire.

[38] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (Dvii^{r} = XV^{r}).

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE REUCHLIN 'AFFAIR'—A DEBATE WITHOUT END

In spite of these lapses the *Augenspiegel* is a document that pleads for tolerance. It shows evidence of an individual's moral courage that defended a minority's religious texts, though rejecting their beliefs. This is all the more remarkable when it is considered there were several well-known Christian polemical writings extant, many written by theologians whose influence on exegesis and Church teachings were decisive.[1] He had seen anti-Jewish sentiment cause the civic authorities to expel Jews from their homelands and subject them to ostracism in countries where they eventually found residency. In the years from 1420 to 1520 they had been forced out of almost every city and territory throughout the German speaking lands.[2] Unlike his contemporaries, however, he refused to equate religious opposition with subversion or consider their religion a matter subject to man's laws; that was solely God's prerogative. This deviation from the popular view[3] was to bring him personal hardship and disapproval from ecclesiastical officials and from many contemporaries who were convinced that his aim was to improve the legal status of the Jewish community. They failed to recognise that for him the question of whether to destroy the Jewish books was a theological consideration linked directly to his personal beliefs. Improvement of their legal situation was not his aim, but as a lawyer he believed they should be tried fairly according to the legal codes, as had been done in the classical period when the unified Roman code of law had defined their status within the Roman Empire.

He believed all that Christians could do for the conversion of the Jews was to pray for their enlightenment and hope it would rescue them from

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[1] R.S. Wistrich: *Antisemitism*: *The Longest Hatred,* pp. 1–5. Also John Gager: *Attitudes towards Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (Oxford, 1985).

[2] Peter Herde: 'Die Kirche und die Juden im Mittelalter', in Manfred Treml (ed.): *Geschichte und Kultur der Juden in Bayern* (Munich, 1988), pp. 71–84. (Veröffentlichungen zur bayerischen Geschichte und Kultur, 17/88).

[3] To cite R.S. Wistrich, 'One cannot ignore Reuchlin's ability to detach himself from the general attitude held by both Church and State where canonical restrictions and Judaized legislation offered the legitimacy of holding Jews in perpetual servitude'. See R.S. Wistrich: *Antisemitism*: *The Longest Hatred,* p. 25.

the Devil's captivity.[4] Their language and the codes of the Cabbala, the letters and their numerical values, were all of mystical relevance to the true believer. Interpretation and elucidation of these mysteries would enable mankind to transcend the reality of humanity to communicate with the Creator. In the *Augenspiegel* the sentence which most clearly indicates his belief is that cited by his mentor Mirandola, 'there is no other science that provides us with greater certainty of Christ's divinity than magic and the Cabbala'. This was his belief and the driving force which sustained him in his long acrimonious dispute with his accusers. He believed that Judaism contained elements of the Cabbala common to Christianity and that the Hebrew language was necessary for its understanding. Hence the Jewish texts should be preserved, and the *Augenspiegel* was his attempt to ensure that this tradition in Judaism was not lost to Christian scholars. Publicly he claimed the pamphlet to be a fuller explanation to his earlier submission to the commission on Jewish books, but it is far more, for it provides an insight into the religious thinking of a humanist scholar who did not belong to the main stream of reformers associated with the German Reformation of the sixteenth century.

Unfortunately, the interest aroused following the publication of the pamphlet took a direction, which Reuchlin neither desired nor foresaw and which was to cloud the debate thereafter. The academic world was divided in their views on whether to support or condemn him. Many serious minded scholars agreed with him and advocated he should have the freedom to pursue his personal intellectual studies, but they were unwilling to follow his religious views, particularly his Cabbalistic beliefs. As the dispute developed without any definitive decision on Reuchlin's integrity, a certain amount of disillusionment became apparent among them. Thus he did not always receive the support he anticipated.[5] Willibald Pirckheimer (1470–1530), a prominent Nuremberg humanist, wrote reproachfully and criticised him for having published the *Augenspiegel*.[6] There were some others who responded favourably to his pursuit of learning, and the first

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[4] G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 20. He distanced himself later from these statements in the *Augenspiegel*, which led to accusations of he having changed his views and thus of being insincere. H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 85, and note 101, also pp. 184 ff.

[5] See Eckardt Opitz: 'Johannes Reuchlin und Josel von Rosheim. Probleme einer Zeitgenossenschaft', in: Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 89–108, here p. 101.

[6] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 66.

batch of their letters was known as the *Clarorum virorum epistolae* (1514).[7] Not all of them, however, supported Reuchlin's positive view of the Jews.

The few remaining Jews within the Empire did not involve themselves in the dispute and there are no records that he received any direct support from them. We have no way of knowing how they saw the debate. The only comment that exists is by Josel von Rosheim (1478–1554) who in his memoirs praises Reuchlin as being one of the wisest people ever to exist.[8] He sees Reuchlin as someone who tried to restore Judaism to its former place of respect. His comment indicates he respected Reuchlin's learning, but their cultural differences would have hindered any attempt to unite in the debate to protect Jewish books.

Later the dispute became entrenched among the pamphlet war of satirical publications known as 'Letters of Obscure Men' (*Epistolae obscurorum virorum*).[9] Here it became entangled in the debates on humanism, religion, nationalism and in personal rivalry battles. Those who championed him, such as Ulrich von Hutten (1488–1523)[10] and Johann Crotus Rubeanus (1480–1545)[11] lampooned Cologne's theological faculty, personified by the Inquisitor General Jakob Hoogstraeten and Ortuinus Gratius[12] (c. 1482–1542), a teacher of literature and philosophy. These publications, however, were less serious in content and distorted his views. They were often written for propaganda purposes,[13] at a time when dissent and apprehension were growing and where warnings of the imminent end of the world were widely

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[7] These were a collection of letters in Latin, Greek and Hebrew written by various authors and sent to Reuchlin. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 322–323.

[8] Eckardt Opitz: 'Johannes Reuchlin und Josel von Rosheim. Probleme einer Zeitgenossenschaft', p. 89.

[9] *Epistolae obscurorum virorum*: *The Latin Text with an English Rendering* by F. Griffin Stokes, p. Lvii, and pp. 427 ff. H. Holborn: *Ulrich von Hutten and the German Reformation*, p. 56.

[10] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 285–289. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 227*, Reuchlin to Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples, pp. 419–427. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 18–20. Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica*: *Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*, pp. 72–73.

[11] Although he wrote against the faculty and was considered a friend of Reuchlin, yet he did not publicly support him when it would have helped his case, as Reuchlin complained in one of his letters. See E. Opitz: 'Johannes Reuchlin und Josel von Rosheim. Probleme einer Zeitgenossenschaft', p. 101. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, *Letter 303*, Reuchlin to Martin Gröning, pp. 394–399, here p. 396.

[12] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 321–322. Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica: Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*, pp. 72–73.

[13] Erika Rummel: *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (New York, 2000), p. 12.

invoked. The articles were written and published without his approval, and projected him into the limelight as an embittered critic of a traditionalist Church. Reuchlin never posited nor pursued the aims of the Obscure Men relative to the Catholic Church's teaching, but those who were enamoured of his outstanding intellectual scholarship were unable or unwilling to see the reality of his views of the Church.[14] Mutian, alias Conrad Mutianus Rufus (1471–1521) was one of the earliest supporters of Reuchlin, but later criticised him for patronising the Jews and for attempting to create a new dogma.[15]

The theological faculty of Cologne University equally defended themselves with polemical arguments, and more seriously, accused Reuchlin of having committed errors of faith in his translation of the Bible, for which he could be arraigned unless he withdrew or abjured them. They also repeated von Tongern's accusation on the legal status of the Jews. His chief adversaries, the theologians Arnold von Tongern and Jakob Hoogstraeten also published articles criticising those who supported Judaism, but these were in reality poorly disguised attacks on Reuchlin. The pamphlet was eventually condemned by a papal commission in June 1520[16] as being offensive to Christian beliefs and favourable to Judaism. The charge of heresy was dropped, but he was ordered to pay the entire costs of the trial, which would have pauperised him. Fortunately, the imposition was never implemented before his death in 1522. All copies of the *Augenspiegel* in Christian hands were to be confiscated and all further use or discussion of it was forbidden. Thus he lost the legal battle that had dragged on for over nine years of his life and which had taken his strength, but he had managed to preserve what to him was the most significant aspect of the whole affair, the integrity of his personal beliefs.

There is also an aspect that is often overlooked in the whole historical debate on the analysis of the *Augenspiegel*. Reuchlin wrote a document which could be seen as attempting to question the exclusiveness of the Catholic Church's dogma of having the sole path to salvation. This was a theme taken up much more radically by later reformers of the Church based on their exegesis of the Scriptures. He pleaded for the integrity of personal

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[14] L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 350–409.

[15] H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 66.

[16] Winfried Trusen: 'Die Prozesse gegen Reuchlins *Augenspiegel*: Zum Streit um die Judenbücher', in Stefan Rhein (ed.): *Reuchlin und die politischen Kräfte seiner Zeit* (Sigmaringen, 1998), pp. 107–131.

belief, without incursions from professional theologians who claimed their knowledge gave them jurisdiction over an individual's efforts to find his true belief. Reuchlin's attempt to find salvation in esoteric philosophy and not in the veneration of relics or in the gaining of indulgences as offered by conventional religion, appealed to his intelligence. The sophisticated study of Hebrew and the application of a complicated notational system derived from the Cabbala were the means to piety and worship. Personal study, knowledge and wisdom were the paths through which an educated layman could achieve a closer relationship with God. Any measures that would result in the loss of sources of knowledge were objectionable to him and had to be vigorously opposed. The destruction of Jewish books with the inevitable disappearance of the Hebrew language in the German speaking areas meant an irretrievable loss of knowledge not only to scholars but to the whole European society. Reuchlin was not successful and his words fell on deaf ears, but it was not his fault that many Christian intellectuals in Europe failed to comprehend the magnitude of his arguments. Some thirty years after his death bonfires and censorship of books were to become an integral part of the Counter-Reformation. The Talmud was burned in Venice in 1553 and the Index of Forbidden Books was introduced in 1559.

Reuchlin's motive for writing the *Augenspiegel* derived from his personal belief and not from any great visionary view that Judaism should be protected. He probably believed, like his fellow Christians at the time of the publication of his *Augenspiegel* that Jewish believers would eventually see the error of their beliefs and voluntarily convert to Christianity. However, he tried to portray Judeo-Christian tradition in a different light to that promulgated by some theologians who saw its eradication in conformity with their beliefs. In his view the Church should revive its traditional policy towards Judaism which it had practised and taught in the classical era, but was redefined in the Middle Ages and led to discordant relations with Judaism. He respected the learning of the Jews, valued their knowledge and was willing to tolerate their religion until such time as they chose to become Christians. If his audience had been more attentive, Judeo-Christian relations might have developed more fruitfully and perhaps prevented the tragedy that enveloped Jewish society in the twentieth century. He has been criticized for withdrawing some remarks and statements that he made at a later stage, but we can hardly judge him for wishing to live out his life in peace after a ten-year long trial that challenged his fundamental beliefs. He made some adjustments to his original arguments where he felt he was misunderstood, but he never retracted

the basic tenets of the *Augenspiegel*. For him the preservation of knowledge was a civic duty irrespective of whether it accords with our opinions. Hence the religious literature of a minority should be saved from destruction by appealing to the public. He believed only posterity could determine its value to society, a view, that is as relevant today as it was in 1511.

CHAPTER NINE

NOTE ON THE TRANSLATED TEXT

The original print used for this translation is held at the library of the University of Tübingen. The title page reads as follows: *Doctor Johannsen Reuchlins| der K.M. als Ertzhertzogen zu Osterreich auch Chur| fürsten vnd fürsten gemainen bundtrichters inn| Schwaben warhafftige entschuldigung| gegen und wider ains getaufften iuden| genant Pfefferkorn vormals ge| truckt ußgangen unwarhaf| tigs schmachbüchlin| AUGENSPIEGEL|* [Thomas Anshelm, Tübingen, August–September 1511].[1] University of Tübingen, (Signatur Ci VIII 28 R).

The title page is followed by a woodcut of spectacles with the lenses decorated inside with laurel wreaths. Underneath the woodcut there is a note on the errors that occurred in the printing of the text.

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[1] Other printed versions include Johannes Reuchlin, *Augenspiegel*, in: *Quellen zur Geschichte des Humanismus und der Reformation in Faksimilie-Ausgabe*, vol. 5, with an epilogue by Josef Benzing (Munich, n.d. [1961]). Online digitalised version: accessed Aug. 2012 at http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/bsb00005456/images/

In an ongoing project to publish an eleven-volume edition of Reuchlin's complete works, edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al., the *Augenspiegel* text appears in *Johannes Reuchlin Sämtliche Werke* vol. 4/1. (Stuttgart- Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 13–168.

For a transcription with a modern German translation see also, *Johannes Reuchlin*: *Gutachten über das Jüdische Schrifttum*, edited and translated by Antonie Leinz-von Dessauer, (Constance, 1965), pp. 28–107. The text is rendered without the prologue of the original printed version.

For an English translation of Dessauer's edition (1965), see Johannes Reuchlin: *Recommendation Whether to Confiscate, Destroy and Burn All Jewish Books*: *A Classic Treatise against Anti-Semitism/by Johannes Reuchlin*; *Transl. and Foreword* by Peter Wortsman (Mahwah, 2000), pp. 31–88.

A manuscript translation in digitised form entitled: *Johannes Reuchlin's*, "Opinion on Jewish Literature" *a Landmark on the Road to Toleration*, by Frank L. Herz (Southbury, CT. 1978), MS 262, is available at Center for Jewish History Collections. I have been unable to acertain whether it was published. See here:

http://digital.cjh.org:80/R/-?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=429030&silo_library=GEN01 (accessed December 2011.)

For a partial translation of the *Augenspiegel*, supporting the arguments given in her book see, Erika Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin*, (Toronto, 2002), pp. 87–97.

> *Am end dißes büchlins findt man ain correctur etlicher wör/ ter so inn dem truck versehen sind im teutschen vnnd latin/ bezaich/net durch die zal der bletter*
>
> Several corrections of Latin and German words which occurred erroneously in printing are to be found at the end of this little booklet indicated by the number of the pages.[2]

The *Augenspiegel* pamphlet translated here consists of the two parts essentially concerned with the question of the Jewish books. Folios (A^r)-(B^r = I^r) contain the prologue, a list of the contents, the imperial and archbishop's mandates, and a summary of his submission to the imperial commission set up to examine Jewish books.

The main text, pages (B^v = I^v)-[F = XXI] is entitled: 'Counsel on whether one should confiscate, suppress and burn all the books of the Jews'.[3] (*Ratschlag ob man den Juden alle/ ire bücher nemmen/ abthun vnnd verbrennen soll*).[4] The original submission to the imperial council was not printed as a separate text. The main arguments of that document are included in the *Augenspiegel*, together with Reuchlin's comments on Pfefferkorn's *Handt Spiegel*.

Parts III and IV of the *Augenspiegel* are partially in Latin and are not concerned with Jewish books but aim to refute the scholastic arguments of his detractors and the accusations of Johannes Pfefferkorn. These segments have been omitted from the translation as not relevant to his arguments for the preservation of Jewish books.

Throughout the original German version Reuchlin supports his arguments by citing Biblical and legal references. The Biblical citations were taken from the Vulgate version of the Bible but in the translation they are renderd from a current English Bible with consequent slight differences in numeration for instance in the Psalms. The Latin legal citations are from Canon and Civil Law texts, with their glosses and commentaries, as used in the Late Middle Ages. These are included in the translation as they appear as in the original German text but without details of their sources. Several scholars, among them G. Kisch, F. Lotter, and E. von Erdmann-Pandžić/B. Pandžić have researched, emendated, annotated and discussed these citations to base their arguments and are well-documented in their publications. Detail references to the civil and canon law sources are given

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[2] My translation.
[3] Ibid.
[4] J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, folio (B^v = I^v).

in the foonotes to Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel* in *Johannes Reuchlin Sämtliche Werke* edited by W.-W. Ehlers.[5]

Only one edition of the pamphlet was printed due to restrictions imposed by the Emperor. Several copies are extant with variations in their print and woodcut decoration. In the two copies consulted, the one primarily used is that of the University Library at Tübingen. The copy contained a woodcut with a wreath enclosed within the rims of the spectacles. The second copy, held at the Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, is without the wreath decoration. An illustration of the latter is shown on the cover. Further copies of the *Augenspiegel* are held in the libraries of Denmark (Copenhagen), France (Colmar), Great Britain (British Museum), Hungary (Budapest) and Switzerland (Basle) and in the major libraries throughout Germany to name but some, Berlin, Göttingen, Munich, and Stuttgart. The imperial prohibition required that the publication should be confiscated wherever it appeared in public. Frankfurt city council was served this injunction on the 28th of March 1513. What effect it had on the publication of the *Augenspiegel* is unknown, but it certainly hindered further sales, though it is unlikely to have prevented private distribution especially amongst those who supported Reuchlin's viewpoint. In the *Defensio* he says he had 1000 copies printed and would have sold them if merchants had not been hindered from buying them by a Frankfurt priest of the common people (*plebeius sacerdos*).[6] He provides no further details, thus the total number sold remains unknown. The growing interest and demand for pamphlets on social and controversial themes, however, would have ensured a wide distribution in a period of political uncertainty.[7] The *Augenspiegel* was printed by one of the foremost printers of the time, Thomas Anshelm of Tübingen.

The title itself is an immediate cause for discussion. Reuchlin uses the term '*Augenspiegel*'[8] which is interpreted to mean 'spectacles'. He says he

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[5] G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 15–36. F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', pp. 65–88. E. Erdmann-Pandžić / B. Pandžić; Juraj Dragišić: *Juraj Dragišić und Johannes Reuchlin: eine Untersuchung zum Kampf für die jüdischen Bücher mit einem Nachdruck der Defensio praestantissimi viri Johannes Reuchlin* (1517) *von Georgius Benignus* (*Juraj Dragišić*), pp. 34–48. See *Johannes Reuchlin Sämtliche Werke*. Edited by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers, et al., vol. 4/1, (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999), pp. 15–168.

[6] J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, pp. 218–223.

[7] See J. Schwitalla: *Deutsche Flugschriften 1460–1525*, p. 6. Also Andrew Pettegree and Matthew Hall, 'The Reformation and the book: A Reconsideration', in: *The Historical Journal*, vol. 47, no. 4, (Dec. 2004), pp. 785–808, here p. 790.

[8] See the entry for *Augenspiegel* in: *Grimm*, vol. 1, col. 812.

entitled it *Augenspiegel* because Pfefferkorn had titled his publication *Handt Spiegel*. He, however, has given it a more appropriate title, not wishing to sully his reputation by being associated with violence, power, and force, which the term 'hand' would indicate, but rather with a scholarly text that permits the readers to 'see' the truth of his arguments.[9] The title could also be interpreted to mean, the reader should look more closely at the text to clearly identify its real meaning. The displayed woodcut was intended to reinforce this view. The laurel leaves of the wreath take the shape similar to that of the eye and thus it is a defensive document with a sign of honour.[10] Thus with the *Augenspiegel* Reuchlin defends his honour and the wreath (*corona*) meaning 'crown' is to be understood as a sign of triumph. In the *Defensio* he states rather enthusiastically that with his *Augenspiegel*, 'I made the truth triumph'.[11] In 1517 one of Reuchlin's vociferous supporters, Ulrich von Hutten, was to give this declaration graphic representation in a printed pamphlet entitled 'The triumph of Reuchlin'.[12] The woodcut shows Reuchlin holding the *Augenspiegel* in one hand and an olive branch in the other while wearing a laurel wreath. He is seated on a floral wagon as part of a triumphal procession through his hometown. The pamphlet, written in the form of a satiric poem, aims to show the readers how Reuchlin had triumphed over his adversaries with his *Augenspiegel*, and to make this widely known amongst scholars.

At a more superficial level Reuchlin insinuates that with spectacles he focuses on the errors of his opponent Pfefferkorn and sees his true intentions of wanting to destroy all Jewish publications irrespective of their usefulness. Lenses were well-known in Europe prior to the seventeenth century, but rarely discussed in literature because they were commonly considered distorting and deceptive[13] despite their value to the reader. The magnification meant that what one saw was not the real truth and therefore should be critically viewed.[14] Spectacles were also the sign of a scholar, as

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[9] J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 219.

[10] Otto Koenig: *Urmotiv Auge*: *neuentdeckte Grundzüge menschlichen Verhaltens* (Munich, 1975), pp. 242–250.

[11] J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*, ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, '*Feci triumphare veritatem*', L. 10, p. 218.

[12] S. Rhein: 'Reuchlins Triumphzug', in Hans-Peter Becht (ed.): *Johannes Reuchlin Phorcensis* (*1455–1522*). *Ein humanistischer Gelehrter* (Pforzheim, 1986), pp. 91–93, (Katalog zur Ausstellung). H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 70–73.

[13] See Harvey Hamburgh, 'Naldini's *Allegory of Dreams* in the Studiolo of Francesco de' Medici', in: *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 27 (1996), pp. 679–704, here p. 695.

[14] Vincent L. Lardi, 'Eyeglasses and Concave Lenses in Fifteenth-Century Florence and Milan: New Documents,' *Renaissance Quarterly*, 29 (1976), pp. 341–360, here p. 353.

they were required by the elderly to read small print. Thus the message to the public is that the text is composed by a learned and scholarly author and requires serious study.

Florence[15] was greatly associated with the development of optical lenses to correct the defects of vision in the mid-fifteenth century. Reuchlin, on his visits there, would have been aware of the city's expertise. A portrait of Pope Leo X by Raphael in 1518 shows him examining a decorated Bible with a magnifying glass[16] as a symbol of learning and wisdom. V. Lardi cites a letter[17] from 1465 in which a Madame Strozzi writes to her son with the warning 'this [letter] of mine is written [with the aid] of eyeglasses, re-read it and meditate over it more than once so that you will understand it well.'

Reuchlin could have chosen the German term 'Brille' for spectacles,[18] which first came into usage in the late Middle Ages and was more commonly used by contemporary writers such as Martin Luther and Johann Geiler of Kaysersberg. He however uses the word '*Augenspiegel*', probably for the effect it would have on the reader. The term is made up of two German nouns '*Augen*' (eyes) and '*Spiegel*' (mirror).[19] The use of the term 'mirror' or its Latin translation *speculum* in European literature of the Middle Ages is well documented. A mirror was used by the 'fool' in the carnival plays of the pre-Lenten period of the late Middle Ages to portray the foolishness and arrogance of society. The 'fool' character criticised in satirical verse the power of the Church and nobles using a mirror to show the vanity of those in authority. It expressed the discontent felt by the common people who saw through the excesses and falsity of those who wielded power. We can only speculate whether Reuchlin wanted to contrast the ignorance of Pfefferkorn and the theological faculty of Cologne with his scholarly work. 'Spiegel' (mirror)[20] was a popular term that would immediately draw

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15 See H. Hamburgh, 'Naldini's *Allegory of Dreams*', p. 696. Also V.L. Lardi, 'Eyeglasses and Concave Lenses in Fifteenth-Century Florence and Milan', pp. 341–360.

16 H. Hamburgh: 'Naldini's *Allegory of Dreams* in the Studiolo of Francesco de' Medici', p. 697. V. Lardi, 'Eyeglasses and Concave Lenses in Fifteenth-Century Florence and Milan: New Documents', p. 358.

17 Ibid., p. 358.

18 See the entry for 'Brille' in: *Grimm*, vol. 2, col. 382, and vol. 16, col. 2228.

19 See the entry for 'Spiegel' in: *Grimm*, vol. 16, cols. 2222–2241.

20 See here Thomas Cramer: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im späten Mittelalter* (Munich, 1990), pp. 271–273. See the entry for 'Speculum', in: *LMA*, vol. 7 (Munich, 1995), cols. 2101–2104. Also the entry for 'Heilsspiegel' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, col. 164. Herbert Grabes: *The Mutable Glass*: *Mirror-Imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 251–271. Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Mantu: *The Coming of the Book*, p. 258.

attention to his publication as there were several works in circulation that contained the term. It was used in titles of theological treatises for the pious, and in ethical guides representing an ideal image on which to model oneself, such as *Fürstenspiegel*[21] (Mirror for Princes). 'Spiegel' was also a common nomenclature in German legal textbooks which Reuchlin as a legalist was most familiar with. A title that included the word 'mirror' would have added weight to his arguments, as it immediately suggests the text to be of a legal nature. Finally there is a theological aspect to be considered. Nicholas of Cusa in his *Idiota* (1450) propounds the view that for the truth of salvation to become visible, the senses are required to examine two worlds, the intellectual and the spiritual.[22] Reuchlin, as one of his disciples, would expect those reading the *Augenspiegel* to see both arguments contained within it.

My translation is intended to be a close rendering of the original German text in English while retaining some of Reuchlin's idiomatic style without sacrificing its meaning. I have tried to avoid inaccuracies but readers are sure to find some and hope they do not affect the overall understanding of author's aim. The pagination of the main text follows that given in the original, which has both folio letters and Roman numerals. I have placed these to indicate the end of each page of the German folio.

The translator will always be faced with the question whether the rendition presented fulfils the author's intention. A translation is at best a compromise between the original language, here sixteenth-century German, and a form of language which can be readily understood today. In Reuchlin's text there are many ambiguous terms where the translator has to decide on their best equivalent in English but without the certainty they equate fully with the author's use. Reuchlin's text is further complicated by his insertion of legal terminology which has no contemporary application or because judicial systems differ. There is also his occasional use of local German dialect, as well as his use of Greek, Latin and Hebrew terms. Hebrew was particularly problematic for authors as Christian printers were not always knowledgeable of the language and hence misprints were likely to occur. The number of readers of the language was also limited at this

[21] See the entry for 'Fürstenspiegel' in: *LMA*, vol. 4 (Munich, 1989), cols. 1040–1058.

[22] On Reuchlin and Cusa's *Idiota*, see Achatz von Müller: 'Reuchlin: Die Welt im Auge und in den Augen der Welt. Wissenschaft und Wahrheit im frühen 16. Jahrhundert', in Daniela Hacke, and Bernd Roeck (eds.): *Die Welt im Augenspiegel*: *Johannes Reuchlin und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart, 2002), pp. 9–16, here p. 15.

period and hence proof reading would have to rely on the author's knowledge of the language and his corrections.

All names in Latin have been allocated their common English usage.

DOCTOR JOHANNSEN REUCHLIN'S

Judge of Civil Law of the Swabian League for His Imperial Majesty, the Archduke of Austria and the Electors and Princes; his truthful apologia against and contrary to the untruthful slanderous pamphlet previously published and distributed by a baptised Jew named Pfefferkorn[1]

AUGENSPIEGEL

In this booklet you will find the following items:

Item: a description of the case including an appropriate preface, [public] declarations,[2] and [a set] of demands.

Item: counsel on whether the Jewish books are to be burned.

Item: to the question currently raised concerning the all and sundry Jewish books and writings, you will find an answer to every aspect without exception in the counsel that follows. This is in a short form throughout all sections of the counsel and it may be submitted to be copied and debated. Throughout the entire counsel, at the outset, in the middle and at the end, all elements are considered with regard to the underlying question whether a book that knowingly aims to mock, slander and blaspheme Our Lord Jesus, his revered mother, the saints or our Christian principles, should be confiscated and burned, if it is wilfully possessed by a Jewish person.[3] This is to

[1] My translation of the title. See also pp. 97–98.

[2] Members of the papal commission set up to examine the orthodoxy of Reuchlin's treatise in 1516 were to consider his use of the term "public declaration" (*protestationes*) in the published text as inappropriate. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, *Letter 291*, Martin Gröning to Reuchlin, pp. 316–347, here p. 336 and n. 8.

[3] A problem arises in modern translations with the German term 'Juden' (Jews) in its application to sixteetenth-century texts. It is often used as if it referred to a race as much as it does to a religious community, but how the term was understood by individuals can only be speculated upon, as the concept of race as understood today hardly existed. The source of the word is rooted in a literal and theological interpreation of the Bible with both being given different levels of emphasis. Here and throughout the entire book, it is intended to mean those of Jewish persuasion. This difficulty has been considered by many scholars of this

be understood, however, in the context that if such writings are [deemed] to be blasphemous or heretical and are hence forbidden to Jewish people, according to Christian principles, they consequently should be confiscated and burned. [See] page two, opposite **J**[4] [II^{r}], page XV, above **H** [XV^{r}], and on page XIIII above, on the opposite side [XIIII^{v}].

Item: the peculiarity of the Talmud; that it is compiled from various and sundry books into one and is categorised into different sections. [See] page III above **M** [III^{r}]

Item: in which books of the Talmud, above mentioned, is blasphemy or heresy found and that are forbidden to Jews, according to Christian principles or statutes, should be burned as advised[5] hereafter. However, this procedure should only be conducted according to the manner that is subsequently discussed in Latin. Apart from these writings, those other books that are not officially condemned or forbidden by Christian principles, irrespective of whether their contents be found useful or useless, good or bad, frivolous or foolish, should be permitted to remain and left untouched as with the other extant erroneous texts. [See] page X in the middle of the page [X^{r}].

Item: all of their other books should be treated likewise.

Item: there follows a discourse with short answers, as is usually done by scholars in their Latin debates at the schools.

Item: finally, a truthful repudiation of the false allegations by the baptised
A^{r} Jew made in the booklet cited as follows. | [A^{r}]

To all and sundry in whichever most esteemed, honourable stand or degree they may be, who are seekers of truth and repudiators of lies, spread by speech and writings, which should rightly be despised according to God's laws, I, Johannes Reuchlin, doctor of imperial laws, beg you to give careful consideration to the following libellous act where falsehood was poured

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period and Erica Rummel's citation of Heiko Oberman's apt comment "much of what later generations condemn as racism ….was a historical given", applies very much here. See Erica Rummel, 'Humanists, Jews, and Judaism' in Dean Philip Bell & Stephen G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany* (Leiden, 2006), (*Studies in central European histories*, vol. 37), pp. 3–31, here p. 12.

[4] Bold type letters are used to indicate where in the text his arguments are to be found. These letters are missing from some printed versions.

[5] Reuchlin uses the term 'obgelut', meaning to announce publicly in a court of law. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 12, cols. 365, 374 and 375.

out[6] in dealings behind my back[7] in a printed, libellous and ignominious booklet entitled *Handtspiegel*, by a baptised Jew, named Pfefferkorn (I wish to the Lord he was truly a Christian)[8] and publicised by way of numerous copies at the last Frankfurt Spring Fair. In it he surreptitiously, maliciously, and in diverse ways pitted himself against me; without cause, rhyme or reason; and through no fault of my own; and though totally unnecessary; without any authority and in irreverence to God's honour and law. Furthermore, it should be deemed a reprehensible and intolerable offence, like a widespread poisoning of the land that can afflict every honest and pious person;[9] which should be fled from and warded off by every means possible. For if it were granted credence, or taken lightly, and thus go unpunished, it could easily give rise to a precedent and lead to the beginning and the opening of a path to followers. It would cause every adversary, who offends any person or wishes to confront someone, to do likewise behind their backs, and whenever he felt like it, libel and defame all respectable, honourable, innocent men and women and even unmarried maidens;[10] as well as every member of high or low standing. Thus no one,[11] irrespective of how honourable and virtuous that person might be, would be free or safe from injury by such vain, insidious and malicious slanderers at any time or in any country. The misdemeanour would then become like a plague or a hailstorm over the entire land that affects nobility and common people alike and would have

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[6] The phrase 'vnwarhafftigen vßgegossen handel' is listed as an example of use meaning, 'to pour out untruthful words in anger'. (My translation). See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 1, col. 875.

[7] 'hinderrucklichen handel gegen mir', cited by Grimm as an expression of surreptitious malignant intention. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 10, col. 1513.

[8] Reuchlin applies many derogatory terms to Pfefferkorn which today would be considered unacceptable.

[9] 'Wie ainen gemainen landschaden/ der ain yeden biderb vnd frumen menschen betreffen möchte'. Cited as a source with the present meaning see, *Grimm*, vol. 12, col. 131.

[10] These were a particularly vulnerable group especially if they came from any of the higher social classes. An allegation against a maiden's reputation would have serious consequences for her and her family in a society where prestige, property and social standing were of major consideration in the forming of marriage alliances. Any form of social ostracism resulting from perceived damage to a person's honour meant the chances of securing a suitable match in marriage would be adversely affected.

There is considerable literature on the state of women in Late Medieval society. See Lyndal Roper, *The holy household: women and morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford, 1991). Shulamith Shahar, *Die Frau im Mittelalter*. Übers. Von Ruth Achlama (Frankfurt, 1988). Edith Ennen, *Frauen im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1985).

[11] Reuchlin uses the term 'dehain' which is cited by Grimm as a source to mean 'none' or 'no one'. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 2, col. 901.

to be borne by every honest person and become set in time as in the old proverb: 'Today me, tomorrow you'.[12] In the same manner it truly and unexpectedly happened to me where I faithfully carried out the instructions, without question and only in loyal obedience to his Imperial Majesty and
A^{v} to My Estee | med Lord of Mainz and [according] to their strict commissions and commands, and thoroughly examined the case that is now to be discredited, by untruthful implications. In objection to these accusations, I beg everyone to listen, humbly and obligingly, patiently and amicably, and in tranquility to the following vindication of my innocence. It is therefore [as follows]:

Sometime ago, following a serious and contentious forum with Jews, as many in Worms are aware, it happened that the above named baptised Jew, decided and assiduously pursued a course, that would have caused all their Hebrew books, of every size and shape with the exception of the bare texts of the Bible, to be confiscated throughout the Holy Roman Empire, as is quite evident and which I can prove by what he says in several of his published books. Consequently, and by sparing no effort and with eminent support,[13] he obtained an ordinance and mandate from his Imperial Majesty, which states that only those slanderous books that the Jews have used to revile and dishonour the Catholic Church and are spread to every corner of the Empire, should be examined by priests and by a number of local municipal councillors, or by secular court officials in every town and city, and if found to contain such offensive material, they are to be confiscated and destroyed.

The precise details of that decree and mandate are undoubtedly fresh in the minds of many. Last year, Pfefferkorn the baptised Jew, brought this same mandate in person to my house, with the request and desire, because I am knowledgeable in Hebrew, to ride at once with him to the Rhine and assist in its implementation against the Jews. But I refused because of my own work and told him that although the opinion concerning the slanderous books was good and laudable, nevertheless, the [mandate] had

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[12] The German proverb, 'Heut an mir, morgen an dir', is listed in the collection of proverbs by Johann Michael Sailer, *Die Weisheit auf der Gasse oder Sinn und Geist deutscher Sprichwörter*, (Augsburg, 1840), 2nd edition (Nördlingen, 1987), p. 60. A similar proverb is found in the *Book of Sirach* 38, 22. 'Remember my doom, for yours is like it: yesterday it was mine, and today it is yours' which was probaly Reuchlin's source.

[13] Reuchlin uses the term 'fürdernus', which first appeared in the fifteenth century. Grimm cites the present text as one of the main sources. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 4, col. 720.

several formal legal defects and deficiencies, which I pointed out to him with my finger. As he was about to leave, he requested and urged me to list and explain why these defects and deficiencies, which I had referred to earlier, were insufficient to enable him to execute the mandate.[14] At his request, I noted those [deficient] parts for him on a piece of paper that I tore off and [gave to him also] in order that he would not conclude I was actively attempting to convince him to desist from the above mentioned imperial | mandate and trying to deceive him, as if he knew very Aij[r]
little about [such matters]; and to prevent him subsequently slandering me by saying I said something else other than what was truly said. For a long time after that I heard no more about the matter, and what he worked at or undertook in the meantime, I do not know. Now a little while ago, around St Bartholomew's Day[15] last year, his grace my lord of Mainz, as Arch-Chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire, and as a commissioner specially appointed to examine the Jewish books in question, sent the imperial mandate, made out to my name, together with the letter of command appointing me to the imperial commission to me personally, in a special closed and sealed letter, which was sent, as he stated, by an officially sworn express messenger.

The exact wording of the commission:

Maximilian by the grace of God Roman Emperor etc.,

Venerable, dear friend[16] and Prince-Elector,[17] we don't doubt, dear friend that you still remember clearly the action we undertook some time ago, concerning the Jewish books and where we, in consequence, set up a

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[14] See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 218.

[15] Twenty-fourth of August. For the saints' days, see Hiltgart L. Keller: *Reclams Lexikon der Heiligen und der biblischen Gestalten. Legende und Darstellung in der bildenden Kunst*. (5th ed., Ditzingen, 1984), p. 74.

[16] The German term used is 'neuen' meaning a 'relative' or 'cousin', also 'trusted'. In Reuchlin's Latin translation of the wording he uses the term *amicus* (friend). See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 169*, Emperor Maximilian I to the Universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg; to J. Hoogstraeten, J. Reuchlin and V. von Karben, pp. 151–154, here p. 153, and notes 5, 6, & 10.

[17] The archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen administered from 26th September 1504 until 11th February 1514. His relationship with the theological faculty of the University of Cologne and his influence on the Reuchlin affair still awaits systematic investigation. For biographical details see Anton P. Brück, 'Uriel, Erzbischof und Kurfürst von Mainz', in: *Neue deutsche Biographie*, vol. 6 (Berlin, 1964), p. 180, and L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, here pp. 219–227.

commission of experts and appointed you and other scholars, together with several universities, as commissioners. Some time ago, we ordered that the books be returned to the Jews, unaltered in the form in which they were written and printed until they receive a further imperial decree.[18] In order that the whole matter of contention be examined thoroughly, we urge you dear friend and earnestly request, that you write immediately to the universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg, as well as to Jakob Hoogstraeten, Inquisitor General and doctor of Scripture at Cologne, Johannes Reuchlin, doctor of laws, Victor von Karpen, priest, and other scholars of the Hebrew language and laws, who are non-Jews; we request that you inform them of our proceedings, and in our name command them to give thorough consideration, as is required, and to counsel how the whole matter at issue should be approached, by which authority and of the necessary measures to be taken subsequently. In particular, to consider whether to destroy such books which they use on the Ten Commandment of Moses, on the Prophets, and the Book of Psalms[19] of the Old Testament and whether
Aij[v] it would be pleasing to God, praiseworthy, | useful, augmentative and beneficial to our holy Christian faith. They shall submit all their reports to you, which you will review and send them, together with your counsel and opinion to us, via Johannes Pfefferkorn,[20] whom we have appointed instigator[21] in this matter. Do not be misled or hindered by any other command but only

[18] It is interesting to note that no reason is given as to why there was a change in imperial policy.

[19] The reference is to all the canonical texts of the Old Testament together with the Thora. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 169*, Emperor Maximilian I to the Universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg; to J. Hoogstraeten, J. Reuchlin and V. von Karben, pp. 151–154, here p. 153, and note 6.

[20] The Mandate sent to Pfefferkorn was identical with Reuchlin's and appears in Pfefferkorn's publications *Beschyrmung* (1516, without place of publication) and in *Streydtpuechlyn* (Cologne, 1516). See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 208 and n. 4. Also Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns* (Tübingen, 1989), p. 204. (*Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism*; 3).

[21] Antonie Leinz–v. Dessauer points out that the term, '*sollicitator*', Reuchlin uses here, meaning someone who for a limited period is empowered to bring charges and initiate legal proceedings, had a specific legal definition. Its use was unusual, but Reuchlin obviously considered Pfefferkorn the legal instigator of the whole affair, as he had obtained the official mandate from the emperor. The term sollicitator in the sixteenth century is not clearly defined but here and throughout the translation it is taken to mean the initiator of a legal case.

See J. Reuchlin, *Gutachten*; ed. Leinz-von Dessauer, (1965), p. 113, and note 18.

carry out this instruction in the required manner and in so doing, you perform our dearest wish. Given at Füssen, on the sixth day in the month of July, in the year of our Lord etc., 1510, in the twenty-fifth year of our reign over the Roman Empire and the twenty-first year of our reign over Hungary. *Ad mandatum domini imperatoris proprium. Per regem pro* [*pria*][22] *ma*[*nu*] *Sernteiner*[23] *subscripsit.* (At the personal command of my lord, the Emperor. In the name of the King, written by my hand, Sernteiner).

To the honourable Uriel, Archbishop of Mainz, Arch-Chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire in the German lands, our dear friend and Elector.

This is the exact wording of the mandate:

We Maximilian, by the grace of God elected for all time Roman Emperor, augmenter of the realm in the German lands, King of Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, etc., Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy and Brabant and Count Palatine etc., we offer our grace and good wishes to the esteemed scholars, our devoted and faithful .N.[24] rectors, vicars and readers of the universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg, Jakob Hoogstraeten, Inquisitor General and doctor of Scripture at Cologne, Johannes Reuchlin, doctor of laws, Victor von Karpen, priest, and to all other scholars of the Hebrew language and laws who are non-Jews, whom we have called upon, with this our mandate or by a certified copy of it. We have commanded the honourable Uriel, Archbishop of Mainz, Arch-Chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire in the German lands, our dear friend[25] and Elector, to initiate and act on the question of the Jewish books which they presently use, other than those on

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[22] For the emendations of the Latin abbreviations see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 169*, Emperor Maximilian I to the Universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg; to J. Hoogstraeten, J. Reuchlin and V. von Karben, pp. 151–154, here p. 153, and note 8.

[23] Zyprian von Serntein (1457–1524) was appointed to the chancery of Arch-duke Sigmund of Austria, an uncle of the emperor, in 1482 following von Serntein's legal studies in Italy. Through his ability in that office he rose to become chief secretary at the imperial chancery. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 177*, Reuchlin to Zyprian von Serntein, pp. 181–185 and note 2.

[24] The printed copy has the letter N. meaning *nomen* (name) or *nomina* (names) in bold type where the name of the addressee could be inserted. See here also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 169*, Emperor Maximilian I to the Universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg; to J. Hoogstraeten, J. Reuchlin and V. von Karben, pp. 151–154, here p. 152, and note 1.

[25] The term used is 'neuen'. See note 16.

the Ten Commandments of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalter of the Old Testament, as is authorised by our commission. We earnestly recommend
Aiij[r] each and | everyone of you to give serious consideration to your counsel and deliberations on this matter and require that you write your counsel and deliberations speedily and submit them to his grace so that he can act and proceed further, according to our command. It is our earnest wish that you do not appear tardy or seem to be negligent in regard to this matter.

Given at Füssen, on the twenty-sixth of July[26] in the year of our Lord 1510, in the twenty-fifth year of our reign over the Roman Empire and in the twenty-first year of the Hungarian reign. *Ad mandatum domini imperatoris proprium. Per regem pro*[*pria*] *ma*[*nu*] *Sernteiner subscripsit.* (At the personal command of my lord the Emperor. In the name of the King, written by my hand, Sernteiner).

The wording of my Lord of Mainz's command:

Uriel, by the grace of God Archbishop of Mainz etc., Prime Elector.

Venerable and most learned, Dear Devoted Sir, we have received a direct commission and command from our most illustrious, most high and mighty, Prince and Lord, the Roman Emperor Lord Maximilian, Our Most Gracious Lord. We have also received a mandate to be sent to you and other scholars and to several universities. A sealed identical copy is enclosed. According to it and by authority of the imperial command and commission, I order you to consider and examine thoroughly, as is required, how and by what means this matter should be approached and treated. In particular to consider whether the destruction of such books which the Jews use, other than the books on the Ten Commandments and Law of Moses, on the Prophets and the Psalter of the Old Testament, would be pleasing to God, helpful to the holy Christian faith, and of benefit in furthering the service of God.

You shall send to us, without delay, the conclusions you come to after your deliberations in order that subsequently we will be able to carry out and complete his Majesty's imperial command. In so doing you fulfil his Imperial Majesty's will and command and do us a great favour.

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[26] This was the date on the document Reuchlin received. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 177*, Reuchlin to Zyprian von Serntein, p. 183, and note 3.

Given at Aschaffenburg[27] on the Monday after St Lawrence's Day[28] in the year etc. [15]10. *Honorabili Johanni Reuchlin doctori etc. Devoto nobis in Christo dilecto*. (To the honourable Dr. Johannes Reuchlin etc., faithful to us in Christ our dear Lord) | *Aiij*[v]

From all of this, I inferred that Pfefferkorn would be dissatisfied and would not accept the first mandate,[29] concerning the above mentioned slanderous books, nor would he subsequently accept my original opinion and counsel, which would have concurred with the [requirements] of the mandate, for he wished to have all their other books prescribed, with the exception only of the Bible. The mandate of Our Most Sovereign Lord, the Roman Emperor, and the command of my Most Gracious Lord, by which I was solemnly summoned and earnestly requested to carry out, I received with dutiful obedience, due reverence and honour, and have accomplished it expeditiously, honestly and thoroughly, and according to the best of my knowledge, as befits a doctor of laws, because I believe I am subject to obedience and to what is right before God. Furthermore, I have neither sought nor got a farthing, nor the value of one, nor did anyone promise or offer me anything for it. No one can truthfully say otherwise. In consequence, I sent this letter of my counsel, which follows hereafter, closed and sealed, as with letters of municipal officials, to my Gracious Lord of Mainz, by way of a sworn messenger as requested and required according to his Grace's commission. The only single copy of my counsel I kept at my own home in the old honourable and traditional way, as is done by the city councillors.[30] But how this same counsel got into Pfefferkorn's or his wife's hands, I do not yet

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[27] Aschaffenburg was the favourite residence of the archbishops of Mainz since the thirteenth century. See the entry on the city of Aschaffenburg in: *LMA*, vol. 1, col. 1102, also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 170*, Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen to Reuchlin, pp. 154–157, here p. 157, and note 8.

[28] Tenth of August. See H.L. Keller: *Reclams Lexikon der Heiligen und der biblischen Gestalten. Legende und Darstellung in der bildenden Kunst*, p. 373.

[29] Reuchlin was probably correct in his belief that Pfefferkorn would not be satisfied, as he had already carried out a missionary campaign in 1506 which did not bring the success he had expected as is clear from his publication the *Judenspiegel* (Cologne, 1508), fol. A2^{v}–A3^{r}. See Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 10, note 10, and appendix p. 207, folio A2^{v}–A3^{r}, L. 21. Also Johannes Pfefferkorn: *The Jews' mirror* (*Judenspiegel*); translated by Ruth I. Cape with a historical introduction by Maria Diemling, p. 43.

[30] From Reuchlin's description it seems he had some hidden depository to store valuable documents in his house.

know.[31] He can only have found out, seen and heard from this document that I did not counsel, as he desired and wished, to confiscate all the books of Jews and burn them, with the exception of the Bible, and which I cannot lawfully advise otherwise. Therefore, he wanted to revenge himself on me personally for his illegal action, which was lawfully and rightly averted. In the end, he was unable to pursue his intention in an honourable way. Yet he dared to compose an untruthful, expressly libellous and slanderous script against me,[32] that he calls *Handtspiegel*[33] prior to which he fruitlessly
Aiiij[r] tried | behind my back to get the help and advice of other people whom I have never knowingly harmed all my life, but among them there could well be some whom I have graciously served, as can be understood by his allegations in Latin. And if they had come to my house I would have treated them with civility and respect and shared with them what God has given me. Pfefferkorn had the libellous booklet published and printed, sold and distributed at the last Frankfurt Fair and by way of his wife's[34] open sale of junk. Furthermore, he sent and gave away copies of it. All of this was done to scandalise, vilify, dishonour and despise me. I had to suffer and endure all

[31] Pfefferkorn maintained in his *Beschyrmung*, folio E2[r], that he was given permission to view the document by the archbishop as he had been appointed imperial "Sollicitator" and thus had a legal right to do so. See also Ellen Martin: *Die deutschen Schriften des Johannes Pfefferkorn. Zum Problem des Judenhasses und der Intoleranz in der Zeit der Vorreformation* (Göppingen, 1994), (*Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik*, Nr. 604), p. 165 and n. 614.

Reuchlin, in his *Defensio*, rebukes Pfefferkorn for making known the contents of his submission to the imperial commission prior to the emperor being informed, and points out that the punishment for publicising information considered to be an offical secret was death by burning or hanging. See Johannes Reuchlin: *Defensio Ioannis Reuchlin| Phorcensis LL. Doctoris/ Contra Calumniatores Suos Colonienses/ Summarium Libri* (Thomas Anshelm, Tübingen, 1513). A transcription of the Latin text with a modern German translation appears in, ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, vol. 4/1, pp. 197–443, here p. 213. Hereafter as J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke* with page number.

A partial English translation of the *Defensio* is given in: Erika Rummel: *The Case against Johann Reuchlin: Religious and Social Controversy in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, pp. 98–108.

[32] Pfefferkorn sent it to Reuchlin shortly after it was published in April 1511. He became convinced it had the backing of the theology faculty of the University of Cologne as it was dedicated to the theologian Arnold von Tongern, a member of the university staff. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 243–248.

[33] A thousand copies were printed and the cost of printing would have been a considerable sum. On the number of copies see J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 215.

[34] He describes Pfefferkorn's wife as a seemingly attractive woman. One can only speculate as to why he should portray her so. Perhaps he wished to insinuate she could be considered to have engaged in prostitution. See J. Reuchlin, *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 223.

all this scandal for counselling and serving Our Most Gracious Lord, the Roman Emperor, for which I should rightly expect a far greater reward and thanks. I, therefore, brought the above named libellous booklet to the notice of his Majesty in the city of Reutlingen,[35] where I presented and showed it to him; and as he requested I hand it over to him. However, as at that time his Imperial Majesty was journeying in great haste through Swabia and was obliged to attend to many other important affairs and as my plea of innocence, as I was informed, needed to be considered unhurridely[36] and with care and attention, it could, therefore, not be heard at length at present. Consequently, I was given an official letter from the honourable imperial secretary stating that his Imperial Majesty wanted and ordered the dispute to be sympathically heard by his Grace, the Lord of Augsburg.[37] However, as I have not been given a fixed date for this hearing and so that I may not be regarded as a frivolous person by strangers unacquainted with me at the forthcoming autumn Frankfurt Fair, as happened at the last when the baptised Jew publicly slandered me, therefore, I will vindicate myself against all the [accusations], with the complete truth and as the wounded party of the day, take my own medicine and cure; though without declining a date to attend the hearing whenever I am called upon to defend my honour. | Aiiij^{v}

I do not want this answer and refutation to be seen or considered as if it were written by somebody who wished to slander or injure someone, but as an exigency which I owe to myself and I am obliged to do so.

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35 On the twenty-ninth or thirtieth of April 1511, he met the Emperor Maximilian at Reutlingen in Württemberg. Pfefferkorn was also there as he wished to present the Emperor with a letter from Archbishop Uriel with details of the University of Erfurt's submission. Reuchlin was strongly supported at the imperial court by scholars who were also present and they questioned and criticised Pfefferkorn about his publication. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 175*, Reuchlin to Nicolaus Ellenbog, pp. 177–179, here p. 178 and n. 4. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 247. Also E. Martin: *Die deutschen Schriften des Johannes Pfefferkorn. Zum Problem des Judenhasses und der Intoleranz in der Zeit der Vorreformation*, p. 165 and n. 618.

36 Reuchlin uses the term 'statten' which Grimm lists as one of the sources meaning 'in aller ruhe' (in quietude). See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 17, col. 977.

37 Bishop Heinrich IV von Liechtenau (Bishop. 1505–1517). Through his position as bishop he was empowered to hold court on civil matters. He apparently never received the emperor's command and thus Reuchlin was obliged to write to friends to intervene requesting a date for the hearing but it never took place and as Reuchlin states caused him directly to print his *Augenspiegel*. See J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 217. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 247 and n. 6. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 178*, Reuchlin to Matthäus Lang, pp. 186–188, here p. 188 and n. 6.

Firstly, therefore, I affirm and testify[38] with this text that what I write, say and notify henceforth with regard to this case, I do or did it, not to avenge the wrong Pfefferkorn inflicted on me (whether he believes it or not), nor to slander anybody. I do it solely to redeem my honour and to allow the truth come to light. It is also for the benefit of the common good so that everyone may learn how to protect themselves from untruthful people and not lightly believe them. I intend to have this objection and those that follow repeated and replicated[39] in a short form in all my speeches, writings and deeds.

Secondly, therefore I declare and publicly testify that with this text, I shall not, nor do I intend, to go to court or take any legal action[40] against Pfefferkorn, the baptised Jew, at this time as above mentioned, because of the pendency of the imperial hearing before my Gracious Lord of Augsburg. Since this dispute concerns a public act, which the same Pfefferkorn inflicted upon me, against God, honour and the law, therefore I, my kin and several others, have the right to serve a summons on him, institute proceedings, and take legal action to enforce a claim for retribution, for which I have a due right to pursue not only according to the civic code but also by the penal sections of imperial law.

However, as such a criminal act does not lapse or expire for less than twenty years I, therefore, do not want to burden any lay prince or ecclesiastical lord with the case but maintain it should be brought before a local court. And I hope in God and in justice that before the twenty years have passed or even a lot sooner, that in due course, Pfefferkorn will land himself at the proper place, in a public trial before the bench, so that I and other judges who may want to judge him in a civil action, where he may be cited for this notorious and widely known, dishonest, evil deed which is forbidden by imperial law under pain of severe punishment. Therefore, I will not devote any further discussion to him in this text; nor have I conceded any right of redress with the explanation of my reasoning.

Further, I affirm and testify myself before all people in my refutation
AV^{r} that follows, if considered deeply and thoroughly, whether one could | find

[38] He uses the term 'bezeug', meaning to declare or testify, in his attempt to convince readers of his lawful defence. Reuchlin's application of the term here is given by Grimm as an example of the word's use in this legal form. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 1, col. 1798.

[39] The term used here is 'geefert' (replicated) which can also have several other meanings at this period but cited here by Grimm to give the present meaning. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 3, col. 32.

[40] Reuchlin uses the term 'übung', again a word with numerous meanings. Here it is cited by Grimm as meaning *actio* (action). See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 23, col. 706.

that I endorsed and prompted a plot, that Pfefferkorn published in a pamphlet that he promulgated, promoted, and disseminated throughout the empire, and which calls on the subjects of the empire to cause an insurrection and tumult against their own authorities; an act which is forbidden by imperial law and punished by hanging.[41] I want every single person [to know], who may take this case before any open court, whether it be the high court of criminal justice where Pfefferkorn should appear, or before the noble, strict and firm, prudent, honourable and wise, honest, legitimate, free judges of the holy Westphalian Vehmic High Court,[42] who hold their

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[41] In a publication entitled, *In diesem buchlein vindet yr ein entlichen furtrag wie die blinden Juden yr Ostern halten* (Cologne, 1509), describing how the Jews celebrated Easter, Pfefferkorn had called on the general public ("gemein man") to bring their views on the practice of usuary ("the father of all sins") by Jews to the attention of the authorities and demand they put an end to it. Reuchlin rather exaggerates the point here where he insinuates it was some form of insurrection that was preached whereas Pfefferkorn's publication is really a demand for strong measures to be implemented by the authorities to prohibit moneylending to the general public. See here Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, pp. 66–67 and note 36.

[42] The court was an independent body established within the county of Westphalia. From the fourteenth century onwards its jurisdiction was no longer confined to that region but covered the entire German speaking area of the empire. The judges of the court were empowered to impose capital punishment in cases where local courts refused or were prevented by local parties. The courts' membership was open to any upstanding person, but the procedure for selection to act as a jurist was held in secrecy. New members were then initiated into the rituals of the court under strict binding rules of secrecy in all activities of the court and were expected to take an active part in carrying out the court's penalties. The court met in public for regular offences and privately to impose sentences outside the Westphalian jurisdiction. Condemned prisoners were excuted immediatly after their sentences were imposed. If the offender was not present he was declared an outlaw and could be executed at any time or in any place where he was apprehended. The fact that the court's decision could be implemented in all jurisdictions appealed to Reuchlin, for if he obtained a judgement by the court against Pfefferkorn for his defamatory allegations, the sentence of the court would have recognition throughout the empire. The contemporary legal structure of the empire lacked this recognition, or its recognition did not always mean acceptance, a point Reuchlin as a practising legalist was well aware of, hence his reference to this specific court. The internal weakness of imperial power in the Holy Roman Empire was the cause of numerous contentious disputes and rivalry between the emperor and ecclesiastical and territorial lords. Legal matters were often provincial affairs and courts had little authority outside their lord's jurisdiction.

The Vehmic court had derived from the church 'moral' courts ('Sendgericht' or 'Sittengericht') set up to deal with matters of moral behaviour in society. Over time other areas came under its remit, in particular crimes of superstition, marriage of blood relations, adultery, perjury, theft, non-payment of dues, non-obeying of Sunday observance and crimes of ecclesiastical discipline and immoral behaviour of lay people in the dioceses. Reuchlin's

sessions in secret, are seekers of justice and orderly executors of the law in cases of widely known, notorious and despicable crimes of wrongdoers who deliberately scoff at and treat with contempt the imperial statutes and penalties, that with this text of mine and in the explanation of my reasoning, I have neither withdrawn nor conceded anything but have reserved the right for myself and whoever else it may be, to submit a justified claim for and against Pfefferkorn in the aforesaid case. With his promulgation and malicious deed he has committed a public outrage in all places; therefore, in accordance with the practice and procedure of that selfsame judge and court, he may also be judged and sentenced anywhere, as has been the custom and practice of that court throughout the ages.

With regard to all that has already been written on the source[43] of this affair, including my appropriate preface, protestations and wording, has proceeded[44] from the [belief] that my actions should not remain hidden or withheld from anybody. Therefore, I place my counsel that follows hereafter before the eyes of many for the first time. I want to disclose and have it known and considered in no other way than solely as a response to a pressing need, thereby many a person may appreciate that the baptised Jew himself could not have had any other proper lawful reason other than the advice that I gave him [on implementing the mandate], to slander and libel me publicly, as he has done in his publication. How brazenly he dares to state openly[45] on the very first page of his libellous booklet, as a pretext for the attributed reason of his publication, such words as that I had vehemently attacked him in my counsel, by my contradiction of his interpretation of Hebrew texts which [he claimed] would be detrimental to his honour and reputation, particularly in the eyes of his Imperial Majesty etc.

And also on the last page he says I made unfounded and unsubstantiated accusations and insinuations against him in the counsel that I submitted to

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study of canon law enabled him to consider the legal question of whether Pfefferkorn could be arraigned before such a court.

See the entry for 'Sendgericht' in: *LThK*, vol. 9, cols. 658–661. Also the entry for: 'Germanisches und deutsches Recht' in: *LMA*, vol. 4 (1997), cols. 1333–1335. Walter Ullmann: 'The development of the medieval sovereignty' in Walter Ullmann and George Garnett (eds.), *Law and Jurisdiction in the Middle Ages* (repr. London, 1988), (*Collected Studies Series*; 283), pp. 1–33.

[43] He uses the term 'herkommenheit' (origin or source) which is cited by Grimm as an early written source of the word. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 10, col. 1110.

[44] The term used is 'vording' (arranged or planned). See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 26, col. 983.

[45] Reuchlin uses the term 'bescheinen' (to show) which is cited by Grimm as a source for the meaning in this form. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 1, col. 1559.

the secular princes and clerical lords, which cannot be proved etc. But all this will be thoroughly and truly | vindicated in the defence which follows AV[v]
hereafter. And I declare, that in my counsel, which I submitted sealed, I wrote a thorough and profound review of several Hebrew words that were incorrectly translated into German for which nobody could construe anything like that which the above named has done and which Pfefferkorn did not instigate of his own accord. There would not have been sufficient legal grounds for him, from all of this to involve me in further matters that are of no concern of his, nor should he vilify and libel me, and be forbidden to do so, in matters that are not of his own concern.

But if I had written to my Most Gracious Lord, the Archbishop of Mainz, maligning him, Pfefferkorn, he in turn would have had the power to defend himself with honour in person before his Imperial Majesty or My Most Gracious Lord of Mainz or by a written statement; or, after making it known to me, he could have undertaken to clarify the matter before a judge of his own choice; or if he did not have it in mind[46] to pursue the matter by any of these two legal paths, then he should have followed the usual legal procedure, and taken a civil action himself against me in a court of law for which he could have demanded at least two pfennicks or four farthings. It would have been a more appropriate approach to compel me to appear in court, but prior to now he has never made a claim against me for this matter, nor attempted to resolve it amicably or legally. But he has applied his invective directly against me, illegally and behind my back, with allegations that are in fact[47] and in reality completely untrue; for truly this is not his province as he is ignorant of the subject matter and it is beyond his understanding. For these are matters to be debated in the philosophical schools in the manner it appears hereafter in the printed Latin appendix to the counsel.

That this act to slander me was premeditated, is evident from all his speeches and writings where he copiously uses insulting and reprehensible words that are notable for their contempt and is clearly evident by the abusive word, 'pigheaded',[48] and in the unseemly art and manner, where

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[46] Here again Reuchlin uses a term 'vermaint' (to intend) which Grimm cites as a source for this particular use. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 25, col. 852–853.

[47] The term used is 'geschicht' (in fact) which Grimm cites as a source. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 5, col. 3861.

[48] The term used is 'saukappe' which has no proper English equivalent. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 14, col. 1899. The term 'sau' (sow) or combinations of it was widely used in depictions of Jews. They were often shown to be wearing a special hat ('Judenhut') for identification and suckling the animal. Pfferkorn's use may be interpreted to mean Reuchlin's close association with Judaism and to suggest his indebtedness to them. He applies several other

he writes contrary to common decency. This offence[49] and evil deed was made publicly known and as it was done wilfully and falsely, therefore, it falls within the remit of the imperial code of law and is subject to its punishment and penalties. To understand all of this clearly, I beg everyone
$B^r = I^r$ to listen to the arguments in my counsel and to the defence that follows. |

Counsel on Whether One should Confiscate, Suppress, and Burn All the Books of the Jews

To His Archiepiscopal Grace, and most illustrious Prince and Lord, Lord Uriel, Archbishop of Mainz, Arch-Chancellor and Elector of the German Holy Roman Empire, etc.

I, Johannes Reuchlin of Pforzheim, master of philosophy and doctor of imperial law,[50] offer my obedient and solicitous service to your most Gracious Lordship, at all times.

The command and decree of the most Serene and Powerful Prince and Lord, Lord Maximilian, Roman Emperor, Our Gracious Lord, which was first sent to Your Princely Grace, and now with a mandate has been sent to me, I have received with appropriate reverence, honour and dutiful obedience. According to this mandate I am commanded to examine thoroughly the case[51] of the confiscated or sequestered Jewish books[52] which they currently use on the Commandments of Moses, on the Prophets and on the Psalms of the Old Testament, and where necessary to consider and to counsel

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adjectives to Reuchlin in his *Handtspiegel* which I present here as illustrations of the language used with their meanings loosely translated; 'Judengönner' (Jew favourer), 'Stubenstinker' (room stinker), 'plippenplapper' (lip prattler), 'beütelfeger' (windbag sweeper) and many others. See E. Martin: *Die deutschen Schriften des Johannes Pfefferkorn. Zum Problem des Judenhasses und der Intoleranz in der Zeit der Vorreformation*, p. 263 and n. 994. On the history of the Judensau see, Isaiah Shacher: *The Judensau: a medieval anti-Jewish motif and its history* (London; 1974). Also Petra Schöner, 'Visual representations of Jews and Judaism in sixteenth-century Germany' in: D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 357–417, here p. 357.

[49] The use of the term 'mißhandel' (offence) is cited by Grimm as a source with the present meaning. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 12, col. 2295.

[50] Reuchlin always emphasised that he was a lawyer and signed his scripts with '*doctor legum*'.

[51] Reuchlin uses the German term, *handel*, on several occasions meaning legal dispute, quarrel, matter, or even person. Grimm cites Reuchlin's text as the source. See Grimm, vol. 10, cols. 370; 371.

[52] He refers to those books that had already been confiscated by the Frankfurt authorities as a result of Pfefferkorn's agitation. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 170*, Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen to Reuchlin, pp. 154–157, here p. 156, and note 1. Erika Rummel: *The Case against Reuchlin*: *Religious and Social Controversy in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Toronto, 2002), p. 11.

according to which authority and by what means and procedures the whole question should be approached.[53]

In particular I am asked to consider the question whether the appropriation of such books would be pleasing to God, praiseworthy and useful to the holy Christian faith, and of benefit in furthering the service of God.

Although I am aware of how insignificant I am to be of service in questions of such great import to the Christian Church and the praise and honour of His Roman Imperial Majesty, nevertheless, out of my bounden duty, for I would rather be regarded as unwise by some[54] than disobedient, I will give my humble opinion in writing to the questions that follow:

Whether the books of the Jews can or should be legally appropriated, suppressed, or burned.

Some say, yes, for several reasons.[55]

First: They are said to be written to oppose the Christians.

Second: They slander Jesus, Mary, and the twelve Apostles, also us, and our Christian laws.[56]

Third: They are said to be false.

Fourth: The Jews are misled by them and thus obstinately persist in their Jewish faith and fail to convert to Christianity.

'Anybody who could ward off such a great evil | and does not hold against it or suppress it, shall be considered equal to the perpetrator and as an abetter,[57] and shall receive the same punishment'; *ex. de. off. delega. c.i. et i. q. i. quicquid invisibilis*.[58] $B^v = I^v$

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[53] One of the accusations made against Reuchlin later was that he did not adhere to the exact terms of the Mandate. Pefferkorn and others maintained he was required to examine only those books that were blasphemous but the wording of the Mandate make it quite clear he was to examine a much wider range. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 208 and n. 4.

[54] This is an indirect reference to Pfefferkorn and other members of the theological faculty at Cologne.

[55] The accusations made against the Jews cited throughout the *Augenspiegel* are taken from Pfefferkorn's various works. For a list of these see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 171*, Reuchlin to Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen, pp. 158–164, here p. 160, and note 3.

[56] This was one of the charges made against Reuchlin by the Grand Inquisitor Hoogstraeten. See Hans Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*: *Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Antijudaismus im 16. Jahrhundert* (Mainz, 1995), p. 43.

[57] I have been unable to trace with certainty the meaning of the term 'Mitverwilliger' given in the text. Grimm lists as its source Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel*. A word similar to it 'Mitvergänger' (accessory or participant in crime) appears in Fischer's Swabian Dictionary and was probably a localised legal term known in Reuchlin's native area. See Hermann Fischer: *Schwäbisches Wörterbuch*, vol. 4, (Tübingen, 1914), col. 1719. See also the entry in *Grimm*: vol. 12, col. 2429.

[58] Reuchlin's legal sources here are given in Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 171*,

But there are several others who say no to this issue, and they, too, have their reasons.[59]

First: The Jews, as subjects of the Holy Roman Empire[60] should be treated according to Imperial Laws. *L. iudei communi romano iure. C. de iude*.[61]

Second: Our property should not be taken from us without our consent; *l. id. quod. nostrum. ff. de. reg. iuri*.[62]

Third: Imperial and regal codes and also other princely decrees forbid that any person should have his property taken by force. *L. i.* §. *nequid autem. ff. de vi. et vi*.[63]

Fourth: Every person should be allowed to retain his old inherited traditions, customs and possessions, even if he were a robber;[64] c. *in literis de resti. spo. in fi.*

Fifth: Therefore, the Jews should be permitted to retain their synagogues, called 'schools',[65] in peace and tranquillity and should not be interfered with; *c. iii. ex. de iudeis*.[66]

Reuchlin to Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen, pp. 158–164, here p. 162 and notes 8 & 9. Also G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 15–35.

[59] He does not identify who these 'others' were. He may have wanted to suggest that he had wider support for his viewpoint than was truly the case, or it may also be a reference to other Cabbalists.

[60] See Commentary, p. 32.

[61] Reuchlin's knowledge of Roman jurisprudence is strikingly shown here where he cites the Justinian legal code which placed the Jews under a more favourable and protective code of law than any of the civil codes practiced in the German speaking parts of the empire. See here G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 24–26. For an explanation of the Latin legal abbreviations and legal sources see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 171*, Reuchlin to Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen, pp. 158–164, here p. 162, and note 12.

[62] Ibid, p. 162 & note 13.

[63] Ibid, p. 162 & note 14.

[64] Ibid, p. 162 & note 15.

[65] The word synagogue was frequently translated in the Middle Ages to mean 'school' e.g. 'Judenschule'. This reflected the Jewish practice where the synagogue served not only as a place of worship, but also as a school for male children and as a religious academy for adults to provide instruction in the Mosaic Law. See the entry for 'Judenschule' in Georg Herlitz, and Bruno Kirschner (eds.): *Jüdisches Lexikon. Ein enzyklopädisches Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens*. 4 vols. (1st ed. Berlin, 1927), (2nd ed. Frankfurt am Main, 1987), here vol. 4/2, cols. 283–285. Also the entry for 'synagogue' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 19, pp. 352–383, here p. 355. Adin Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud* (New York, 1976), p. 103. John H. Mundy: *Europe in the High Middle Ages 1150–1309* (2nd ed. New York, 1998), pp. 62–63. See also the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 10, col. 2356.

[66] For the legal sources see Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 171*, Reuchlin to Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen, pp. 158–164, here p. 162, and note 16.

Sixth: Such Jewish books have never been condemned or censured by either Canon or Civil Law.[67] *Patet per omnia corpora iuris et patrum decreta*.[68]

And therefore, they state one should not wrench such books from the Jews, suppress or burn them.

In the name of God: Amen.

To answer the question fully one has to consider what *zizania*[69] or weed is and what *triticum* or wheat is, so that the one will not be pulled up with the other, as it says in Holy Scripture, Matthew 13.[70]

Now I find that there are different categories of Jewish books.

First: Those of Holy Scripture, which they call *Essrim Varba*,[71] and means twenty-four, which is the number of books in their Bible.

Second: The Talmud:[72] This is the collected teaching and elucidation of all the commandments and prohibitions given in the Torah, which are the five books of Moses. There are 613 in number and were written down by many of their erudite scholars in ancient times.[73]

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[67] It is noticeable that no legal sources are cited here to support his statement.

[68] 'As manifested in all the codes of law and in the Decretals'. My translation.

[69] Throughout the text he shows his profound knowledge of languages by introducing Greek terms, as seen here, and in his use of Hebrew in other passages. Not alone was he fluent in Classical languages but also had a profound knowledge of Arabic. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 124, and note 2.

[70] Matt. 13, 29. This is one of the most significant points of his whole argument in the defence of Jewish writings and it is quite clearly theological, based on the Bible reference and not derived from any Civil Code, despite his claims of 'not being a theologian'.

[71] Essrim varba = Esrim we-Arba'ah. These are the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible, five of Law, eight of the Prophets and eleven of Writings as mentioned in 2 Esdras 14, which were adopted as the authoritative scriptures of Judaism by Jewish rabbis towards the end of the year AD 100. These also became accepted by Christian scholars as forming the authoritative scriptures of Judaism. The Imperial Commission on the Jewish books excluded these principal sections of the Jewish Bible.

[72] The history of the sections of the Bible that became included in the Christian Bibles is given in Peter R. Ackroyd, *CHB*, vol. 1, p. 115, and p. 135.

An oddity of the entire controversy, as L. Geiger remarked, is that none of the contradictory parties had read the Talmud, probably the most important piece of evidence on which they could have supported their claims. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 117, and note 1.

[73] 613 was the traditional number of laws in the Torah on ethical or ritual matters. The five books he refers to are generally called the Pentateuch. The number used here differs from modern versions of the Talmud, which contains 517 chapters arranged in sixty-three tractates. In the Middle Ages the *Jerusalem Talmud* listed a number of chapters on laws pertaining to the temple and sacrifices (*Kodashim* order), but by the time the Talmud appeared in print these were no longer included. Reuchlin may have based his number on earlier versions of the Talmud or on oral descriptions he had received from Jewish scholars. See the entry for 'Pentateuch' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 15, pp. 745–747. A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 91–93.

Third: I find [books] of great enigmas on the words and expressions of God, which they call *Cabbala*.[74]

Fourth: I find glosses and commentaries on each book of the Bible written by their scribes and scholars. Such glosses or commentaries are called *Perusch*.[75]

Bij^{r} = II^{r} Fifth: I find [books of] sermons, | on disputations, and exegetical books, that is called *Midrasch*[76] or *Draschot*.[77]

Sixth: I find those of savants and philosophers of all sciences. These are generally known by the term *Sepharim*,[78] meaning books, and are classified according to the name of the author and the title of his subject.

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[74] It is divided into two streams of thought. One deals with the creation of the world and divine revelations and the other with man's relations with God, later known as the Cabbala. A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 211–218. See the entry for 'Christian Kabbalahists' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 11, pp. 671–673.

[75] Reuchlin's source here is the exegesis of Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki of Troyes (1044–1105), known also as Solomon ben Isaac or in the short form as Raschi. He was renowned for his profound commentaries on the Bible and on the Babylonian Talmud. During his lifetime many copies of the commentaries he wrote were disseminated in pamphlet form rather than in books, hence they are referred to as 'Perush' (*ha-kuntres*) meaning pamphlet commentaries. See A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 69–72. See the entry for 'Talmud' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 19, pp. 470–487. Also the reference to the term 'Perusch' in Emanuel Bin Gorion (ed.): *Philo-Lexikon, Handbuch des jüdischen Wissens* (Berlin, 1936), (repr. Frankfurt am Main, 1992), p. 554. On Rashi, see Esra Shereshevsky: 'Rashi's and Christian interpretations', in: *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 61 (1970–1971), pp. 76–86. Also Esra Shereshevsky: *Rashi, the Man and His World* (New York, 1982). H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte* (*11.-13. Jh.*), pp. 36–40.

[76] The *Midrash* (Halakhah) is the body of expository literature used by Jewish sages to interpret the Mosaic Law of the Bible. Reuchlin uses both terms 'Midrash' (Midrashim) and 'Draschoth' (Deraschot) as if they were interchangeable, with Deraschoth meaning exposition or sermons. 'Draschot' may also be a solecism for either 'doresh' (ha torah), meaning one who interprets the law, or 'asmakhtot' (supports). It indicates his limited knowledge of Hebrew sources, as Jewish scholars, particularly Rashi and some Spanish commentators of the early Middle Ages, distinguished clearly between these terms. The term 'asmakhtot' constitutes an aid to memory in rabbinical legislation, linking it with the scriptural text, but was not considered an authentic part of the Talmud. In contrast some parts of the Midrash are considered authentic sources of Halakah, the biblical regulations governing the conduct of society and individual practices. See A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, p. 222. See the entry for 'Midrash' in R.J. Zwi Werblowsky (ed.): *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* (Oxford, 1997), (3rd ed. Oxford, 2003), p. 463. See also the entry for 'Midrash' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 14, pp. 182–204.

[77] These are homiletic interpretations of the Bible used by David Kimchi (1160–1235). Whether Reuchlin was aware of the differences is unknown unless it was pointed out to him by one of his Jewish teachers.

[78] The systematic classification of subjects found in the Talmud is known as the 'orders' (Sedarim). Adin Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, p. 36.

Finally: I find those of poetry, fables, tales, satires, and didactic manuals. Each book has its own title as conceived by the author. The majority of the Jews consider these to be fictitious and false.[79]

It may be that there are several of the above mentioned books in existence, but only very few will be found to contain mockery, slander, or blasphemy against Our Dear Lord and God, Jesus and His honourable mother and also against the Apostles and saints. I have read no more than two examples of them; one is called *Nizzachon*,[80] and the other *Tolduth Ieschu ha nozri*.[81] They are considered apocryphal even by the Jews themselves, as Paul

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[79] Reuchlin did not have complete access to all Judaic literature and was dependent on auditory accounts of their various religious books. His reference is probably to the legendary (aggadah) sources.

[80] *The Nizzahon* ('Victory of Judaism') is an anthology of anti-Christian arguments, probably written at the beginning of the fifteenth century by Rabbi Yom Tov Lipmann Mühlhausen. However more recent research cast some doubt about the authorship. Reuchlin's copy was destroyed during the Worl War II and establishing origin of the text has proved difficult. There was an earlier collection of similar writings from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. It was ostensibly directed towards Christian readers explaining the contextual meaning of the derogatory references to Jews in the Scriptures. In reality, it is a defence of Judaism against the accusations of Christian authors. However, modern scholarship, such as the study by David Berger, views the arguments as a response by Jewish writers to the Christian philosophical debate on the nature of Jesus as both God and man.

It was listed among the the books Pfferkorn wished to have confiscated at Worms in 1509 but apparently the Jewish community did not possess a copy. Reuchlin obtained a copy of the manuscript which he later presented to his sponsor, friend and fellow Cabbalist Johannes von Da(h)lberg (1455–1503). Under some unknown circumstance it was eventually returned to Reuchlin's library. Reuchlin appears to have studied the manuscript in depth as is evidenced by the polemical remarks made in three languages on the border of the script. In his library it was listed under the category of books entitled 'Proof that the Jews are opposed to the Christians', and he considered it extremely hostile to the Church. He refers to it later in his publication *Defensio* where he uses it as evidence to show that he never favoured Judaism, contrary to his protractors. See J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*, ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 371. On the doubtful source of the text see W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, p. 18 and pp. 207–214. For Reuchlin's library see K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', pp. 72–74, also notes 298 and 299. *Nizzahon*: *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages*: *A Critical Edition of the Nizzahon Vetus*, *with Introduction*, *Transl. and Commentary* by David Berger (Philadelphia, 1979). L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 41–45. See also H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld* (*13.-20. Jh.*), pp. 424–427. On Pfefferkorn's listing see: Elisheva Carlebach: 'Jewish responses to Christianity in Reformation Germany', in D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 450–480, here p. 455.

[81] This is a late medieval rabbinic account of the birth of Christ, based on folk literature, in which Jesus is described as the illegitimate son of Mary and Joseph Pandiora. Several versions of the same story existed. Fragments of it have been found in Aramaic and its origin

of Burgos[82] writes in the second part of *Scrutinium*, chapter six[83] (*secunda parte Scrutini. c.vi.*). I heard quite often from Jews with whom I had many discussions some time ago, at the court of Frederick III,[84] our sovereign lord's father, praise be to his memory, that such books were appropriated and destroyed by the Jews themselves and it has been forbidden to write these kind of books or debate them ever since.

Now to come to the question itself, I say therefore, if a book were to be found on a Jewish person, and that person being aware that such a book has been directly and maliciously written to shame, disgrace and dishonour Our Lord Jesus, His honourable mother, the saints or our Christian laws, then according to Imperial Decree it should be confiscated and burnt, and that same Jew punished for having failed to tear, burn or suppress it himself.

I consider this to be legally justified, firstly according to the statute codified in *I. Lex cornelia*.[85] §. *Si quis librum. ff. de iniur.*, where it states: 'what

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appears to go back almost to the beginning of Christianity. Many of these Jewish writings were undoubtedly polemical in nature and were a reaction to the anti-Jewish literature and to the proselytising attempts of Christian fanatics. Reuchlin also considered them to be polemical and approved their destruction. For a German translation of the book see: *Ein jüdisches Leben Jesu: die verschollene Toledot-Jeschu-Fassung Tam u-mu' ad*: *Transl. and Edited* by Günter Schlichting (Tübingen, 1982). On Christian polemical preachers see: Steven J. McMichael and Susan E. Myers (eds.): *Friars and Jews in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Leiden, 2004), p. 214, and note 38. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 228, and note 1.

82 Paul of Burgos (Pablo de Santa Maria, ca. 1350–1435) was originally called Solomon Ha-Levi, but later converted to Christianity and became a member of the Dominican Order. Parts of his in-depth study of Nicholas of Lyre's *Postilla* were also used by Alfonso de Spina in his *Fortalitium fidei*. Reuchlin uses the text here to strengthen his own argument in defence of the Jewish texts. See Jeremy Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*: *The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca, 1982), pp. 174–195. Steven J. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah: Alphonso de Espina's Argument against the Jews in the Fortalitium fidei* (*c. 1464*), (Atlanta, 1994), pp. 82–84.

83 This is a reference to *Dialogus Sauli et Pauli contra Iudaeos*, also called *Scrutinium scripturarum* which was published in Mantua 1475, but was probably written in 1432–1434. The book comprises mainly disputations on Judaism. In chapter six he states that the *Toledot-Jeschu* is considered to be apocryphal by the Jews and that Mary's holiness is confirmed by not having committed adultery. The specific reference is p. 2, dist. 2, and chapter. 6. See Hans-Martin Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 184.

84 Frederick III of Habsburg (Emperor 1440–1493). See Commentary, p. 45.

85 *Lex Cornelia de civitate* is a code of legislation covering many aspects of the administration of the state, which was enacted in 83 BC. For Jewish believers it was of great significance, for the law granted them the right to practise circumcision as part of their religious rites. See the article 'The legal condition of the Jews in the Roman Empire', in: *Temporini*, here vol. 13, pp. 662–762. Amnon Linder: *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*,

procedure is to be taken if a person composed, printed or published a book that dishonoured, slandered or insulted another or who has maliciously authorised such, irrespective of whether it was done under a pseudonym or anonymously; the municipal senate has the authority in penal law | to prosecute and impose a penalty [for such an offence.]' Bij^{v} = II^{v}

Furthermore, there is another Imperial law: *l. i. C. de famos. lib.*, that also states, 'If a person finds an offensive libellous script in his home or the public road or wherever, without being previously aware of its existence, he should tear it up before somebody else comes across it, but even more importantly, he should not attempt to make its contents known to the public. If, however, that person fails to tear or burn such scripts or books from the moment of their discovery, but makes the contents known to another, then he should be aware that such a person will be held solely responsible for this evil act and will be arraigned and punished accordingly.

It is, however, right and proper to do such a deed if it is to defend the person's own interest or if it is believed to be in the interest of the common good, but then that person should state the accusation publicly. And he can state openly that he intends to pursue the matter by way of a libel court case and he should not fear to come forth. That person should be aware, that if the statements are found to be the truth, then he will receive great praise and a large reward from our majesty. However if such [an accusation] is proven to be untrue, then that person will lose his head for it. But in any case, such writings should never damage another person's good reputation.'[86]

Introduction, Transl. and Commentary (Detroit, 1987), pp. 100–101. See *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary*, p. 198. Also Bernhard Linke: *Die römische Republik von den Gracchen bis Sulla* (Darmstadt, 2005). For Reuchlin's legal refernces here see Friedrich Lotter, 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 65–88, here p. 67, and note 8. See also *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 29, and notes 2 & 3.

[86] Reuchlin cites here the two main forms of criminal procedure in law. The *accusatio* form granted the plaintiff the right to the defendant's property, if the case was proven in court and the defendant was condemned. If the plaintiff failed to prove the case and the defendant was absolved, then the accuser received the punishment the defendant would have received if he had been found guilty. In the *denunciatio* procedure the information was given to the civil authorities who then prosecuted the case. See the article by Charles Zika, 'Agrippa of Nettesheim and his appeal to the Cologne Council in 1553: The Politics of Knowledge in Early Sixteenth-Century Germany' in James V. Mehl (ed.): *Humanismus in Köln/ Humanism in Cologne. Studien zur Geschichte der Universität zu Köln* (Vienna, 1991), pp. 119–174, here p. 168, and note 132.

It is quite evident, therefore, from these two rulings of the Imperial code that a libellous book should be suppressed, confiscated and destroyed and, anybody who does not do so shall be severely punished. In particular, one should confiscate and burn such libellous books that belong to somebody who failed to burn or tear them up himself. But only after a thorough examination and after [the person] has been lawfully convicted, as the legal code prescribes, namely: 'One may not take away another person's property immediately after he has been consigned to prison, but only after the sentence has been passed on him.' The late Emperor Hadrian[87] codified and regulated this statute. *L. ii. ff. de bo. damnat.* That is sufficient said on the slanderous scripts, which I referred to in the last section on Jewish books.

The handling of this issue should be no different from the procedure in the case of any other Christian in a similar trial, as both sects[88] are constituent members of the Holy Roman Empire and are the emperor's subjects,[89] we Christians through our Electors, who vote and elect the emperor,[90] and the Jews by their voluntary and public statement when they said: 'We
Biij^{r} = III^{r} have no king but Caesar', John 19.[91] |

Therefore the Imperial Law is binding for Christians and Jews, each according to his estate.

Furthermore, according to the decree of his Imperial Majesty's commission the *Essrim Varba*, that is the twenty-four books of the Bible, should be

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[87] Publius Aelius Hadrian (AD 117–138) codified all past decisions of the praetors and introduced legal procedures. In citing these statutes Reuchlin supports his arguments with one of the most authoritative legal codes, though he could hardly have chosen a more unsuitable character to gain favour with the Jewish community. Hadrian was the oppressor who desecrated their most holy ground by causing a temple to be erected and dedicated to the Roman god Jupiter on the site of the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem. See the entry for 'Hadrian' in: *LThK*, vol. 4, cols. 1309–1310.

[88] Reuchlin apparently derived its use in this form from N. Cusa. See Commentary, p. 76 and also the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 16, col. 407.

[89] This is the basis of his legal arguments throughout the document.

[90] He emphasises the ordinances of Charles IV's Golden Bull of 1356, which regulated the election procedure of German kings and thereby removed the papal veto to the imperial title. According to its provisions the seven prince electors were to choose their king by a majority vote. See Geoffrey Barraclough: *The Origins of Modern Germany* (1946), (3rd ed. Guildford, 1988), pp. 301–319. Roland Pauler: *Die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Kaiser Karl IV. und den Päpsten. Italien als Schlachtfeld der Diplomatie* (Neuried, 1996).

[91] John 19, 15. Reuchlin uses the Bible reference to support his positive view of the Jews as fellow citizens. See G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 8. Jerome: Ep. 53, 9 *Ad Paulinum Presbyterum*: PL 22 549 as cited in Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 30.

excluded[92] from this legal counsel, and rightfully so, for one should leave every page of these as they are, keep and respect them and hold them in great honour: *fa.s Hieronymi in prologo*[93] *bibliae ibi. Discamus in terris. Et ij. ad Timotheum, iij*:[94] *Ominis scriptura*. The Master of the Sentences[95] affirms this in the preface to his work where he says our Christian religion has adopted these very same [texts] into the canon of books, *xv. distinctio. c. sancta romana ecclesia*, as a witness to the eternal truth.

Therefore, I will begin by speaking firstly about the others, and principally of the Talmud. This is a collection of the teachings on all of God's Commandments as has been listed above in the second disposition. It was compiled, as several writers say, about four hundred years after the birth of

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[92] There is no specific reference to the exclusion of these books. He may have wished to emphasise that some Jewish texts had already proven their usefulness to Christian scholars, and thereby support his own argument, but he may also have wanted to prevent Pfefferkorn's attempts to obtain a further mandate to confiscate and destroy all Jewish writings. Reuchlin had a valid legal point, however, in that the commission's remit was limited to examine only those Jewish religious writings on Moses, the Ten Commandments, on the Prophets and Psalters of the Old Testament. 'Und sunderlichen ob solliche bücher so sie über die bücher der zehen gebot Moysi der propheten unnd psalter des altten testamennts gebrauchen abzethon'. See *Augenspiegel*, folio (Aiij^r). The commission was not to be considered a church authoritative body established for the approval of the entire Jewish literature. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 228, and note 4.

[93] He strengthens his argument on the authority and canonicity of the Hebrew Bible by citing in Latin Jerome's preface to his translation of Samuel and Kings, the *Prologus galeatus*. In this work Jerome states there were twenty-two books of the Bible corresponding to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and that he considers the Hebrew Canon to be the most reliable. Those books of the Bible not included in that list were to be considered apocryphal. As further proof of the significance of Hebrew Bible sources Reuchlin quotes Jerome's reference to his use of it in his commentary to the Christian Bible. On Jerome's preface see *CHB*, vol. 1, pp. 138, and pp. 532–535.

[94] 2 Tim. 3, 16. (Jerome says this in his prologue to the Bible and in 2 Tim. 3, and throughout [his writings on] the Scriptures). See Jerome: Ep. *Ad Timotheum secunda*: PL 29 847 A.

[95] Theologians began to create a systematic collection of extracts from works of the early Church Fathers from the beginning of the twelfth century in an attempt to find answers to contemporary complex theological issues. These collections became known later as *Sentences*. The most ardent compiler was Peter Lombard (1100–1160) Bishop of Paris, also known as the 'Master of sentences' (*Magister sententiarum*). His works, 'The Books of sentences' (*Libri sententiarum*), were approved as authoritative textbooks by the Lateran Council in 1215 and were used for instruction at the universities of Oxford and Paris until superseded by Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*. Lombard's works consisted of four volumes. The study of the *Sentences* became required reading for theology students who were then expected to produce their own comments on the questions which Lombard had posed, and thereby exhibit their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Accounts of Lombard's compilations and his works are to be found in: *Bibliotheca Palatina*, ed. Mittler (1986), pp. 37–42. Also William J. Courtenay: *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton, 1987), pp. 41–45. See the entry for 'Petrus Lombardus' in: *LThK*, vol. 8, cols. 367–369.

Christ.[96] But I have read in Hebrew books, however, that the Talmud was collected and collated from the works of many masters and edited and made into lecture-or book form by Rabbi Asse,[97] like we have done with our *Decret*,[98] the *Book of Sentences*, or the *Catena aurea*.[99]

It was supposed to have been written 44 years after Hyrcanus.[100] The last Hyrcanus was the brother-in-law of King Herod and it was during his reign that Jesus Christ was born. But there were also other Hyrcanuses, and therefore there may be an error in the number of years [of its existance], for the nobly born and most learned, Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola,[101] says in the *Apologia*[102] that the Talmud was compiled one hundred and fifty years after the birth of Christ. But there are, however, two versions

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[96] Reuchlin's dating of the Babylonian Talmud conforms to present day scholarship and indicates the extent of his researches. A. Steinsaltz gives the main period of compilation as between ca. AD 200 and 500. Adin Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, p. 41. See also the entry for 'Talmud' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 19, pp. 470–487.

[97] The reference is probably to Rabbi Ashi (AD 352–427) although the orthography differs. Little is known of his origin, but he was recognised as a profound scholar and teacher who expounded the rabbinic laws relating to liturgy, Civil Law and ethics. Formerly scholars of the Babylonian Talmud believed he had edited and classified the *Mishnah*, but more recent research considers his status to be that of the last of the masters to set down categorical statements in the Talmud which were elaborated on, but not added to, by his successors. The difference in orthography of the name was caused by the lack of standard rules on accepted forms of spelling in the German language, with the result that authors rendered the same name in a variety of forms. A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 45–46. See also the article 'Ashi's influence on the Gemara' in: *Temporini*, vol. 19/2, p. 292, and pp. 308–318. See the entry for 'Rabbi Ashi' in Linsay Jones (ed.): *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (Detroit, 2005), vol. 1, pp. 457 ff., and vol. 14, pp. 257 ff. See also Reinhold Mayer: *Der Talmud*. Ausgewählt, übersetzt und erklärt (Munich, 1980), p. 21.

[98] See Commentary, p. 33.

[99] The *Catena aurea* are exegetical writings from early Christian times, in which successive verses of scriptural text were elucidated in form of 'chains' of passages (scholia), derived from previous commentators. See the entry for 'Katenen' in: *LThK*, vol. 6, col. 56–57.

[100] Hyrcanus was the name of a dynasty of princes and high priests of the Maccabees from the region of Hyrcania. The reference here is to John Hyrcanus II who ruled from 63–40 BC and was related through marriage to Herod I. For biographical details see the entry for 'Herodes I' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, col. 263, and for 'Johannes Hyrkanos II' in: idem. vol. 5, col. 586.

[101] For the Cabbala the major study still is Gershom G. Scholem: *Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbalah* (Berlin, 1962). C. Wirszubski: *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, pp. 122–125; 161–169. On Jewish Cabbalism see José Faur: *Homo Mysticus—A Guide to Maimonides's Guide for the Perplexed* (New York, 1998). Frances A. Yates: *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age* (London, 1979), pp. 17–22. Lynn Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. 4 (New York, 1966), pp. 485–591.

[102] See Alexander Thumfart: *Die Perspektive und die Zeichen*: hermetische Verschlüsselungen bei Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (Munich, 1996), pp. 24–26. Also L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. 4, pp. 485–511.

of the Talmud; one is called the *Jerusalem*[103] and the other known as the *Babylonian*.

Be that as it may, the Talmud has unquestionably been in existence for far more than a thousand years. It is divided into four parts,[104] just as we also have divided all our sciences into four superior faculties, Theology (*Theologia*), Civil Law (*Leges*), Canon Law (*Canones*),[105] and Medicine (*Medicina*). The first part deals with sacred matters, festivals and ceremonies and the second is about herbs and seeds. The third part is on marriage and women and the fourth is on legal rulings and laws.[106] Petrus Nigri,[107] however,

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[103] The *Jerusalem Talmud* is primarily based on the oral law or *Mishnah* and was edited and codified in Palestine and Caesarea during an era of intense political upheaval (ca. AD 130–200). It did not receive the authoritative status associated with the *Babylonian Talmud*, due to its imprecise compilation and editing. However, in recent years it has attracted greater interest of scholars. *The Babylonian Talmud* became the object of great scholarship and established itself as one of the most authoritative religious books. See A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 53–54. Also the article 'Jerusalem Talmud' in: *Temporini*, vol. 19/2, pp. 292–308.

[104] His division into four categories is incorrect, as both the Jerusalem and the Babylonian versions of the Talmud are arranged according to the six orders of the *Mishnah*. This inaccuracy can be explained perhaps by his dependence on secondary sources for his knowledge of the Talmud. See A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 36–39; 89–91. J.H. Mundy: *Europe in the High Middle Ages 1150–1309*, p. 72. See the article 'The Babylonian Talmud' in: *Temporini*, vol. 19/2, pp. 281–294.

[105] The four principal subject areas of study at a medieval university were theology, arts, jurisprudence and medicine, but without the subdivision of legal science into Civil ('Leges') and Canon ('Canones') law. Here he may have wished to emphasise, that courses of study should be more scientific in their approach and less orientated towards a curriculum designed to fulfil the needs of the Church. On liberal arts see Betsey B. Price: *Medieval Thought*: *an Introduction* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 50–58. See the article 'Artes liberales vom 12. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert', in: *TRE*, vol. 4, pp. 156–171.

[106] Reuchlin's four categories differ from the standard structure of the Talmud, though the order of tractates is not always identical in every version of the Talmud. Generally the 'Seeds Order' is in the first category, whereas 'Festivals' is part of the second; the remaining sections are as listed by Reuchlin. See A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 89–91.

[107] Petrus Nigri (1434–1484) (Peter Schwartz), one of the foremost scholars of oriental languages in the Middle Ages, had made a particular study of Hebrew in order to convert all Jews to Christianity. As wandering preacher he held sermons in various towns throughout the German lands as part of his missionary campaigns. At the invitation of the Bishop of Regensburg he debated with selected rabbis of the Jewish community in the city on the nature of the Messiah. Two of his polemical sermons, *Tractatus contra perfidos Iudeos de conditionibus veri messie* (Esslingen, 1475) and *Stern des Meschiah* (Esslingen, 1477) were printed and widely distributed. *Stern des Messias* examines the question of the coming of the Messiah in Judaism, which according to Christian tradition had already taken place, but in Judaism was yet to occur. Nigri claimed it could be proved from Jewish religious books that they retained false hopes of the coming, and hence that Judaism was a false religion. Throughout the late Middle Ages his views were given great credence by the authorities. Reuchlin, too, recognised his scholarship of Hebrew and based his knowledge of the differences between

in his book, which he calls *Stern des Messias*,[108] and which has been printed in Latin and German, writes that it is divided it into six parts.

Biij^{v} = III^{v}

Now it may well be that after the death of Our Lord Jesus, the Jewish masters saw, | that the Christians wanted to 'keep a tight rein'[109] and draw the Gentiles to their faith, as it says in the Scriptures, Acts 13,[110] and in consequence these masters assembled together at that time, to preserve the old teachings and doctrines and to resolutely confute the disputations and altercations of the heathens and converted Jews. Thus they collected in book form the opinions and expositions of their old masters and of their most gifted, profound, and erudite scholars. However, in order to preserve the results of these great efforts and labours from being lost, which they and their forefathers had in composing and writing them, a work in which God Himself would take pleasure,[111] they have commanded their own people to hold this book in great esteem. It is quite reasonable and understandable, therefore, that in order to prevent their teachings being treated with scorn by their descendants, they cited, presented, expressed and wrote down all that was conceivable. This was fervently done so that they could be better at defending themselves against the Gentiles and apostate Jews and to 'shake them off'.[112]

Sephardic and Ashkenazic pronunciation on Nigri's studies of oriental languages. Nigri's sermons were originally published in Latin, but were later supplemented and translated into German in 1477. Further print runs were made in 1495 and in 1518. On Reuchlin's knowledge of Jewish polemical literature see Moshe Goshen-Gottstein: 'Reuchlin and his Generation', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 151–160. See also Christopher Ocker, 'Contempt for friars and contempt for Jews in Late Medieval Germany', in S.J. McMichael, and S.E. Myers (eds.): *Friars and Jews in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, pp. 119–146. Peter Browe: *Die Judenmission im Mittelalter und die Päpste* (Rome, 1942), p. 106. On 'Petrus Nigri' see the entry in: *LMA*, vol. 6, col., 1979. Heinz Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (13.-20. Jh.)*, (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), pp. 544–546. See also Christopher Ocker, 'German Theologians and the Jews in the Fifteenth Century' in, D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 33–65.

[108] *Der Stern des Meschiah* was the first non-Hebrew book to include Hebrew characters and thus appeared to readers as an authoritative work. Reuchlin mentions this work several times throughout the text. See Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, 'Witchcraft, Magic, and the Jews in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany', in Jeremy Cohen (ed.): *From Witness to Witchcraft: Jews and Judaism in Medieval Christian Thought* (Wiesbaden, 1997), pp. 419–433. C. Ocker, ibid.

[109] This is a well known German proverb. See also *Grimm*, vol. 31, cols. 403–404.

[110] Acts 13, 44., ff.

[111] An indication of his magnanimous views towards Jewish writings is clearly indicated here.

[112] The wording he uses is based on the Bible text Acts 13, 51, 'they shook off the dust from their feet'.

Regrettably, I am painfully deficient in knowledge of that same Talmud, and although I would have been willing to pay double in order to be able to read it, I was never able to succeed.[113] Therefore, I have no knowledge of it except from our books, written against it.[114] Nevertheless, I do believe that the Jews have 'mixed and blended'[115] in it many words and expressions against Our beloved Dear Lord Jesus, his friends and followers, as they said to his face in his lifetime, 'He is just the son of a carpenter and a poor woman',[116] and 'We know him well, he is possessed by the Devil',[117] and 'He is not a Jew but a Samaritan and a leader of the people',[118] and 'He reviles and blasphemes God',[119] and he wanted to set himself up as a king,[120] and deprive the Roman emperor of people and land. Arising from this, they had Him arraigned and then obtained a judgement against Him from an

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[113] L. Geiger points out that as late as 1494, the publication date of Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico*, he was unable to procure or obtain access to a copy of the Talmud and referred to it by the incorrect title of 'Thalmudim', indicating his unfamiliarity with the manuscript. Reuchlin never possessed a copy of the Talmud nor did he study it, as he publicly admits here. The technical difficulty at that time of copying over two and a half million words of non-Latin script, and its sheer size, with 6,000 pages, would have made it rare and extraordinary expensive. The first known printed copy was published in 1497 and was an incomplete edition. This was called the *Sanhedrin* and Reuchlin possessed two copies. He writes in one of them that he acquired it in 1512 from 'Christian hands', as he cautiously says, but mistook it for the *Jerusalem Talmud*. The *Sanhedrin* contained the Jewish code of criminal law and was of particular interest to Christians, as it was hoped to obtain details of the trial procedure of Jesus of Nazareth. In the midst of the controversy and while still under the threat of being tried before an Inquisitional tribunal, Reuchlin continued to acquire Jewish texts. This indicates clearly the value he placed on them. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 117, and note 1; p. 172, and note 2. A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, p. 76. W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 139–144. Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica*: *Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*, (Amsterdam, 2005), p. 69. (*Catalogue of the exhibition in the Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica, commemorating Johann Reuchlin* (1455–1522)). H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, pp. 159 ff.

[114] For titles of these polemical works see P. Browe: *Die Judenmission im Mittelalter und die Päpste*, pp. 105–110. Also H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld* (*13.-20. Jh.*).

[115] The terminology 'undergemüßt und gemengt' meaning, to cause confusion and chaos. See also the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 5, col. 3275.

[116] Matt. 13, 55.

[117] John 6, 20.

[118] John 8, 48.

[119] Matt. 26, 65.

[120] Matt. 27, 11, and Luke 23, 2. In citing numerous Bible passages, he quite obviously applies theological arguments to support what was tendered as a legal document showing evidence that his true defence of the Jewish Talmud was based on religious considerations rather than legal ones.

imperial judge which led to Him being sentenced to death. It is probable that one finds such expressions and similar sentiments in those sections of the Talmud where the material provides opportune occasion to write about it in this manner. Just as one also finds in the same books, a lot of strange parables, disputations, parables, allegories and similes, in the form
Biiij^{r} = IIII^{r} of arguments such as a scholar might use in a disputation with another.[121] |

I, too, believe that if we heard such or had it read to us, we would take it to be strange and unusual.

I cannot confirm all this with certainty, as regrettably due to the lack of texts I have never studied the books of the Talmud. Neither am I aware of any Christian in the entire German realm who has studied the full contents of the Talmud. Nor has there ever been in my lifetime a baptised Jew[122] who could read or understand the Talmud in all of the German realm, except for the Chief Rabbi of Ulm[123] who, it is said, reverted to Judaism immediately afterwards in Turkey.[124] The Talmud is not written solely in pure Hebrew, although it uses Hebrew letters, as in the Bible, but it includes

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[121] It is in statements like these that we see evidence of Reuchlin's tolerance. Unlike his contemporaries, he put forward an explanation why offensive passages might occur in Jewish writings, and not as had frequently been suggested, as evidence of Jewish intransigence and hatred of Christians.

[122] This is probably an indirect reference to Pfefferkorn who was unable to read Hebrew and whose knowledge of Jewish literature was mainly through polemical texts.

[123] Rabbi Mosche Zaret (†1518), also called Moses Gunzenhausen, was one of five rabbis appointed by the Emperor with responsibility to implement the imperial taxes in the Jewish community. He lived and worked as rabbi in Ulm from 1480–1492. In his teaching he rejected the allegorical interpretation of the Bible, which led to a dispute with fellow Jewish teachers and he was threatened with the imposition of the ban. For some unknown reason he was coerced to convert to Christianity in 1495. He later emigrated to Turkey and probably to Erez in Palestine where he reverted once more to Judaism. The details on his life are scarce and it is not possible to verify the complete accuracy of the story. Reuchlin's account may have been based on hearsay rather than on any real incident as there were many tales of apostate Jews generated by Christians in their missionary campaigns. The few references available are to be found in Ayre Mainmon, Mordechai Breuer, and Yacov Guggenheim (eds.): *Germania Judaica*, vol. 3/2 (Tübingen, 1995), p. 1503 and p. 1505. H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 132. Reuchlin held an intense correspondence with humanists in Ulm, in particular with the city's chief medical officer, Dr. Johannes Stocker (ca. 1453/55–1513) who may have been Reuchlin's source of this story. Gottfried Geiger: *Die Reichstadt Ulm vor der Reformation: Städtisches und kirchliches Leben am Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1971), pp. 62–75. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 192*, Reuchlin to Johannes Stocker, pp. 247–260.

[124] Jews under the Ottoman rule were in a much more fortunate position than their co-religionists in the German lands as they were seen by the Turks to have valuable skills in languages, commerce and agriculture which were essential to the Ottoman Empire. See Bernard Lewis: *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton, 1984), p. 139.

a variety of other oriental languages namely Babylonian, Persian, Arabic, Greek and others.[125] There are also many abbreviations in it, thus it requires great diligence and arduous study to interpret and hence not many Jews comprehend it, not to mention Christians, [understanding it].[126]

To the considered issue, therefore, I say that the Talmud should not be burned or suppressed for the aforementioned reasons and those which follow hereafter.[127]

First: It is common knowledge that there has to be superstition and error, and that human rationality cannot prevent it, as St Paul writes in chapter eleven[128] in the first epistle to the Corinthians. And this occurs by the will of God, in order that the true believer and 'those who are genuine among you may be recognized', as the Apostle clearly states in the aforementioned reference. And do we not call such people 'superstitious', who wrongly interpret Holy Scripture and willingly adhere to their interpretation, contrary to the exposition demanded by the Holy Spirit. *xxiiij. q. iij. c. inter heresim et. c. heresis*.

And how rightly it is said that the Jews cannot be 'heretics',[129] for they have not fallen away from the Christian faith because they have never been in it.[130]

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[125] It is noticeable that he does not mention Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of many Jews in Palestine and the language in which most of the Babylonian Talmud is written. This may have resulted from his inability to obtain an original text and his unawareness of the importance of the language for Talmudic sources. A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 41–42; 64–65.

[126] Reuchlin's hearsay knowledge of the difficulties in studying and interpreting the Talmud is quite correct. See A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 64–66.

[127] This is the quintessence of the whole text and the message which he wished to present to the authorities, that the Jewish books should be preserved for the essential knowledge they contain.

[128] 1 Cor. 11, 19. St Paul is Reuchlin's main source in the Bible for his defence of the Talmud. He cites this Bible reference to indicate that false believers included Jews, but it does not categorise them as heretics.

Reuchlin's view was confirmed by Bishop Georgius Benignus who stated God granted that evil hada use when good can arise from it. See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 106 and note 71. Bishop Benigus later became a member of the commission appointed by the pope to examine the orthodoxy of Reuchlin's text. See Matthias Dall'Asta, "Paradigmen asymmetrischer Kommunikation: Disputationsliteratur im Judenbuchstreit", in: Wilhelm Kühlmann (ed.): *Reuchlins Freunde und Gegner. Kommunikative Konstellationen eines frühneuzeitlichen Medienereignisses* (Ostfildern, 2010); (*Pforzheimer Reuchlinschriften*, vol. 12), pp. 29–43, here p. 38.

[129] In the original text he uses the Latin word 'haeretici' (heretics) and avoids the narrower meaning German term. See Commentary, p. 58, and note 39.

[130] He argues in the *Defensio* that historically the Church in its treatment of Jews adopted a humane approach and he adduces as proof a statement of Pope Gregory the Great (ca. 540–

Thus they cannot and should not be called heretics, nor their dissention[131] be declared a heresy. *Cle. j.de. usur.et ibi.glo.in.ver. hereticum*. Yet, they are all included in the words of the Apostle, where he speaks in the passage of 'factions' in faith, just as we and the Jews are not united in faith.[132] Therefore it is useful and valuable to us that the Talmud is extant and that it should continue to remain in existence. The more preposterous the Talmud is, the more it enables us Christians to refute it in word and script.[133] |

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And if we are really truthful about it, it is a perfect medicine against the lethargy and laziness of those, such as the clergy;[134] *xxiiij. q.iij. ca. fi.*, who should study the Holy Scriptures and prepare themselves, so as to be potent and formidable disputants to confute opponents,[135] and able to exhort others to the true teaching and as Paul writes to Titus.[136]

Likewise in Aristotle's *Elenchis*[137] where it says, 'a wise man should have two attributes, namely: He should tell the truth and should be sufficiently learned to refute falsity. And not like an unlearned person, who burns books in anger, because he is unable to disprove them in sensible lectures and disputations. Otherwise it is called simply an 'ale house' argument, where the uncouth person strikes with his fist when he is unable to say anything further to the discussion'.

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604) that is incorporated into the *Decretum Gratiani*: '*Item quod blandimentis, non asperitatibus debemus eos ad fidem rectam perducere*' (Likewise that we must lead them to the true faith by gentle measures [and] not by force). My translation. See J. Reuchlin: *Defensio*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 341. See also G. Kisch: *Zasuis und Reuchlin*, p. 21; p. 74, and note 15.

131 The German word used is 'hendel' meaning disagreement or discord. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 10, col. 371.

132 Reuchlin puts a very positive interpretation on this passage as the text does not mention 'faith', but talks about divisions within the church community. See 1 Cor. 11, 17–19.

133 A similar view had also been expressed earlier by Origen (ca. AD 185–254). See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 106, and note 71. Also E. Erdmann-Pandžić / B. Pandžić; Juraj Dragišić: *Juraj Dragišić und Johannes Reuchlin: eine Untersuchung zum Kampf für die jüdischen Bücher mit einem Nachdruck der Defensio praestantissimi viri Johannes Reuchlin* (1517) *von Georgius Benignus* (*Juraj Dragišić*), pp. 105–119.

134 This point had been attested by Augustine in an earlier period of the Church.

135 The Inquisitor Hoogstraeten rejected this point and maintained that it had already been condemned by Christian scholars. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 98. See Commentary, pp. 55–56.

136 Tit. 1, 9.

137 The citation is from Aristotle's *De sophisticis elenchis* ('*On Sophistic Refutations*'). See Aristotles: *De sophisticis elenchis* 165a. The English translation differs slightly in wording. See Aristotle: *De sophisticis elenchis*: *Transl.* by W.A. Pickard-Cambridge (Oxford, 1928).

In the Psalter[138] it says, 'Let a good man strike or reprove me in kindness.'[139] How can one combat or refute that which he does not understand, as St Jerome wrote against Jovinian.[140] Now if somebody wishes to say the Talmud is in error or that it is directed as an insult against us Christians, that person should at least understand its language. For 'he who does not know the power of words and language errs gravely', says Aristotle in the aforementioned book.[141] Augustine also says in *De vera religione*[142] 'the language of Holy Scripture is to be understood according to its peculiarity of form, for every language has its own distinctive manner and mode of expression. If that same language is translated literally it will appear to everyone to have neither rhyme nor reason'.[143] The code of Canon Law says it also in, *distin. xxxviij. locutio*. This can be expounded to mean that the Talmud contains so many peculiarities of language, as stated above, that not even every Jew, fluent in Hebrew, is able to understand it. Thus, what grounds are there for Christians to condemn the Talmud which they do not even understand?

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[138] The *Psalter* contains the 150 psalms found in the Old Testament of the Bible and was one of the most popular devotional books of the Middle Ages. It was read by both the clergy and the educated layman. A well-known commentary to the psalms was that by Nicholas of Lyre. This work appeared in the vernacular entitled *Psalmenkommentar* by the Meistersinger Henry of Mügeln (ca. 1346–1378). Over 40 manuscripts of this translation are extant. It was printed in 1475, and subsequently in 1504, indicating the demand was extensive. On Henry of Mügeln, see Thomas Cramer: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur im späten Mittelalter* (Munich, 1990), pp. 52–53.

[139] Reuchlin uses the Psalm numbering as it appeared in the pre-Christian Greek Septuagint Book of Psalms. This differs from the numeration system found in the Hebrew text and in *Authorised Versions of the Bible*, where it is listed as number 141, 5. See *CHB*, vol. 2, pp. 309–491.

[140] Jovinianus († 405) wrote articles against Christianity and was condemned as a heretic, together with his followers Auxentius, Genialis, Germinator, Felix, Prontinus, Martianus, Januarius and Ingeniosus, at the synods held at Milan and Rome in the fourth century. Very little is known of his writings other than that which can be gleaned from two opposing letters *Adversus Jovinianum* by St Jerome. See the entry for 'Jovinianus' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 1147–1148. Also Jerome: *contra Iovinianum*: PL 23 222. Cited in: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 33.

[141] Aristotles: *De sophisticis elenchis* I. 4. 165a. See also: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 33.

[142] 'On true religion' is one of the many works of Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430), written in the years 390/391, in which he considers the Trinity to be the basis of true religion. See Augustine: *De vera religione*, *Caput* L: PL 34 166 as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 34.

[143] He quotes here the words of St Augustine which became incorporated into Canon Law. See Augustine Ep. 148 *Ad Fortunatum* c. 15 in: *CSEL* ed. A. Goldbacher, vol. 44 (1904) p. 344 21ff. cited in F. Lotter, 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden', p. 73 note 31.

I will give you a small example of this. Recently a booklet was printed,[144] hostile to the Jews, where reference was made to a prayer said to be incorporated in their prayer books, which they are supposed to recite especially against us Christians. It begins thus: .דלמשמדים[145] In consequence serious and grave charges are being levelled against them, that they, maliciously and
C^{r} = V^{r} with wilful desire curse the holy Apostles, their baptised successors, | the entire Christian church, and the Roman Empire. In this way one could easily incite such hatred against the Jews amongst the unlearned and those ignorant of the language that they could lose life and limb. If, however, one looks at it in the 'correct light' one finds no word in it which refers to or means

144 This was an indirect reference to Pfefferkorn's books '*Ich bin ain Buchlinn der Juden veindt ist mein namen*' (Augsburg, 1509) (I'm a little book—the Jew's enemy is my name) and to his *Handt Spiegel* [Mainz, 1511]. My translation of the title page. Reuchlin later denied that he had implied Pfefferkorn's publications and maintained his reference was to Petrus Nigri's work, *Stern des Meschiah*. Pfefferkorn had adopted Nigri's arguments in his *Handt Spiegel* and cited from his work. Reuchlin's claim that his criticism was not directed at Pfefferkorn was weakly defended, for *Stern des Meschiah* was first published in 1477, more than thirty years earlier, and he had not written against it previously. He quite clearly uses the term *kurtzlich* (recently) which suggests that personal criticism was intended. Furthermore, he makes several indirect references to him throughout the *Augenspiegel*. Reuchlin may have feared the consequences of a heresy trial at a later stage of the controversy, and in an attempt to ward off further charges wished to ameliorate some of his earlier more outspoken criticism and hence his denial. See also L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 229; 230.

145 The prayer begins with the word '*Welameschumodin*', meaning 'and the destroyed'. This prayer was part of the standard set of eighteen benedictions of the *Amidah* prayer in Judaism and was originally composed as a curse on Jewish heretics. It was directed against those who according to Judaism were considered to be heathens and informers in the period after the destruction of the temple, when Judaism was under threat from other religious movements. Pfefferkorn, in his polemical text *Ich bin ain buchlinn der Juden veindt ist mein namen* (Aii) used the Hebrew terms 'destroy' and the 'welcoming of the Devil' as evidence of the Jewish conspiracy towards Christians. Reuchlin apparently changed his earlier view on these prayers, for in his publication, *Doctor Johanns Reuchlins tütsch missiue, warumb die Juden so lang im ellend sind*, he criticises these prayers for their antichristian elements. Pfefferkorn correctly points this out in his *Handt Spiegel*. H. Peterse maintains Reuchlin's defence of the prayers in the *Augenspiegel* may have resulted from having acquired greater knowledge of the Hebrew language in the meantime. See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 29–45. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 207, and note 2; p. 214, and note 1. A. Steinsaltz: *The Essential Talmud*, pp. 101–103. See the entry for 'benedictions' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 3, pp. 330–333. See Johann Reuchlin: *Tütsch missiue*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin: Werke*, p. 11. Similar anti-Jewish accusations to those made by Pfefferkorn appear in a later publication (1530) by another converted Jew Anthonious Margaritha in his *Der gantz Jüdisch glaub* (The Whole Jewish Faith). See the article by Maria Diemling, 'Anthonius Margaritha on the "Whole Jewish Faith:" A sixteenth-century convert from Judaism and his depiction of the Jewish religion' in: D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 303–333, here p. 327.

either 'the baptised', or 'the Apostles', 'Christians', or 'Roman Empire'. Wherever the Jewish language is written or used the term, משמך[146] it is never found to mean either 'chrism' or 'baptism', but its meaning is based on the word 'to destroy', as it appears in the Book of Proverbs 14:[147] 'The house of the wicked will be destroyed'. And in Ezekiel 14:[148] (*Ezechielis xiiij*) 'I will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel' and likewise in other references. Therefore the term משמדים[149] in that prayer is a verb or an active form of the present participle,[150] and means 'the destroyers' or 'those they will destroy', as if they wished to say, 'those who wish to destroy us shall not hope to succeed.' How can it refer to 'the Christians' when there are no other people on this earth who have given them so much freedom and refuge[151] as the Christians? This is found confirmed in both Canon and Imperial Law.[152] And they, through their declaration of fidelity, to have no other lord but the Christian emperor, render it unthinkable that such a prayer should be composed against the will of the Christians. Furthermore, they say this prayer in all parts of the world wherever they live, be it under the Turks,[153] by the Sultans,[154] among the pagans,[155] and the Tartars[156] or among us. They know full well that they

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146 The reference is to the singular form of the Hebrew term '*mishmad*' meaning 'destroyer'.

147 Prov. 14, 11. Reuchlin uses the Latin term, *proverbiorum*.

148 Ezek. 14, 9.

149 His reference is to the plural form of the Hebrew term '*mishmadim*' meaning to 'destroy'.

150 In the original text Reuchlin refers to the grammatical structures in the Latin language i.e. '*verbum*' and '*participium activum praesentis temporis*'. In the translation I have rendered them in English.

151 In the text Reuchlin uses the German word, 'underschleuft'. This term is usually applied in a negative sense to mean a hiding-place or cover for those engaged in some illegal ventures. Reuchlin's use of the word in a positive sense here is cited by Grimm as a rare instance of its use in this manner. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 24, col. 1793.

152 See Commentary, p. 32.

153 At this period it would have included the Balkans, North Africa and the states around the Eastern Mediterranean.

154 This was the newly acquired area of Egypt which came under Turkish rule in the early sixteenth century.

155 Reuchlin uses the term 'pagan', a term that has theological connotations, but here I have interpreted it to mean those areas of the then known world peopled by none of the three major religions i.e. Islamic, Judaic or Christian. See the entry for 'Heidentum' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 73–76 and the entry for 'Heiden', in: *HAD*, vol. 3 cols. 1634–1653.

156 Tatars (or Tartars) are groups of Turkic speaking peoples that settled in the European and Asian areas of Russia after the death of Genghis Khan in 1227. Following their defeat by the Russians in the fifteenth century, their kingdom became divided into three and one of them, at the entrance to the Crimea, became a vassal of the Ottoman Sultan in 1475. Jewish

would be much more disconsolate if there were no Christian people, for they are hated more and treated much worse by the heathens[157] than by us.

Secondly, the term מיכים[158] means 'all those who have not the true faith'. How can we say we are these, and that it does not refer to others?

Thirdly, the term קניבי[159] means 'enemies' which according to its proper meaning cannot refer to us, for as I have truly shown above, we and they are jointly citizens of the Roman Empire, and abide by a common Civil Law and a common public peace. How, then, could we be their 'enemies'? We have a good glossary to the laws on this point;[160] *in. c. Sicut iudei. super ver. cimiterium ex. de iude.*

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groups, expelled from Christian lands, moved into these areas during the Middle Ages. A tradition of Judaism existed along the River Don, where a Turkic tribe, the Khazars, had been converted to Judaism in the tenth century. The tribe had become dispersed by the Middle Ages. In the fifteenth century the Tatars were seen geographically as located in the northern regions of Eastern Europe and Asia. See the entry for: 'Tataren' in: *LMA*, vol. 8 (1997), cols. 487–488.

157 Reuchlin uses the term 'heathen', but it is unclear as to which cultural group he refers. I have taken it to mean all Muslim cultural areas where Jews came to reside following their expulsion from Spain in 1492. He wishes to point out how well the Jews were treated according to the laws of Christian countries in comparison with their legal position in others. This of course was far from reality, as they were being expelled from many Christian countries at the time of Reuchlin's publication. In contrast, Jews and Christians who became subjects in Muslim states received far greater legal protection and tolerance of their beliefs. In these occupied territories, religious leaders, both Jewish and Christian, were granted civil and religious authority over their respective groups, provided they recognised Muslim suzerainty, the primacy of Islam and paid the required taxes, which were lower for Christians than for Jews. Furthermore, the lack of European languages amongst the rulers enabled Jews to become invaluable translators and interpreters of correspondence with the West, with some individuals rising to diplomatic status. See B. Lewis: *The Jews of Islam*, pp. 62–280. Also David Englander, Diana Norman, et al.: *Culture and Belief in Europe, 1450–1600*: *An Anthology of Sources* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 305–306.

158 Here Reuchlin refers to the Hebrew term 'minim' ('the wicked') which is part of the synagogal benedictions and had long been used in anti-Jewish literature throughout the Middle Ages. Unlike many of his fellow Christians he applies a positive interpretation by quering whether it refers to Christians, pagans or heretics and thereby entered a theme that has been long debated by scholars and outside the scope of the current translation. See here William Horbury, 'The Benediction of the *minim* and early Jewish-Christian controversy' in: *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S., vol. XXXIII (1), (April, 1982), pp. 19–61, here p. 34.

159 He uses the Hebrew term 'kneebe' (?) None of the Hebrew scholars with whom I have corresponded have been able to find a translation which confirms that rendered by Reuchlin. There is no entry for it in Gesenius's *Handwörterbuch des Alten Testamentes*. Wilhelm Gesenius: *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament* (16th ed. Leipzig, 1915). W. Ehlers renders the translation to mean 'enemy'. See *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, here p. 35, and note 2.

160 A citation of the legal code reference is provided by G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 28.

Fourthly, the term מלכותזדון[161] means the 'power of pride' and the term מלכות[162] by itself does not mean 'domaine', otherwise the word 'royal' would be added. This can be clearly seen in Holy Scripture | Joshua 12,[163] 'one day 31 kings came into the field to fight against Joshua and all were defeated in a single day'. These were not kings of realms, but chieftains who had power and authority over a troop which belonged to them. Every day we read and sing of the same in our churches in Psalm 118,[164] 'the proud shall be shamed'. If therefore in this prayer there is no word which, correctly represented, means neither 'baptised', nor 'Apostle', nor 'Christian', nor 'Roman Empire,' why then is such grave slanderous speech permitted to be printed and published?[165] As if one wanted to say the Jews refer to us in their hearts and minds. But none, other than the Creator of All Hearts, knows what anyone has in his thoughts. Therefore, a person cannot be reprimanded or punished on that account; *l. cogitationis. ff de. pen.* And if one says it himself, another person would not be punished for it; *l. repeti.* §. *i. ff de questio*. Now I am not going to elaborate further on the other words in the same booklet, which were probably misunderstood, and thus improperly translated into German, such as where it says that when they greet a Christian at home or in the street and say, 'you are welcome' ('*Seit wilkum*') the author of the book says they say, '*Sed wilkum*' as if this phrase, meant 'welcome Devil', but according to correct grammar[166] of the Hebrew language this cannot apply, for when

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161 'Sidon makut' (?) meaning 'tyrannical power' as translated to German by W. Ehlers. However, it is usually and traditionally rendered as 'malchut zedon', meaning Christian authority. See Maria Diemling, 'Anthonius Margaritha on the "Whole Jewish Faith:" A sixteenth-century convert from Judaism and his depiction of the Jewish religion,' p. 326. See *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 35.

162 'Makut' (Malchut?), meaning 'kingdom' or perhaps territory. He uses the German terms 'Das Reich' (empire) and 'Königreich' (kingdom). The English translation does not permit the differentiation that Reuchlin uses-which would be like splitting the term 'kingdom' into 'king' and 'dom'.

163 Joshua 12, 7; ff.

164 In both versions of the Bible this reference to the passage in the Psalm is numbered as 119, 21. See: *RSV*, here p. 749 and in Frank Charles Thompson (ed.): *The Thompson Chain-Reference Bible* (5th ed. Indianapolis, 1988), p. 686.

165 His rhetorical question was really a criticism and an accusation of the church and civil authorities. They permitted the publication of an incorrectly translated, inflammatory text, thereby apparently condoning acts of coercion against fellow citizens of the empire.

166 Reuchlin's library contained a number of Hebrew grammars, but the most scholarly of them were those by exegete and lexicographer David Kimchi (c. 1160–1235). He purchased a copy of the grammar on the 12th June 1498 for the sum of three gold gulden on his third visit to Rome. It was one of his most valued books and served him not only in his exegesis of Hebrew Biblical texts, but also to emend his own Hebrew grammar and dictionary, *Rudimenta*

שד[167] means 'devil' it has a dot on the right side of the letter 's'; therefore 'sch' is read '*sched*'. Every country yokel would notice if they said '*sched wilkum*' that it does not sound like *Seit wilkum*,[168] for *sched* is completely dissimilar to '*Seit*' (to be). Therefore it is 'ducks cackle'[169] and childish chatter and of no consequence for this counsel.

Every discerning person will recognise and accept that no one can legally censure the Talmud, who does not understand it, as it says in Canon Law; *xxxvij. distin. in canonae Qui de mensa*.

If somebody wanted to criticise the mathematicians and had no knowledge of mathematical science or of numerology, the people would mock him, or likewise with somebody who wanted to dispute with philosophers, but is ignorant of the methods and teachings of philosophy. That is the sense of the Canon Law text.

On the other hand one may counter and say, 'I need not understand the Talmud because there are so many books written against the Jews where I can read that the Talmud is an evil book'. Master Raymond[170]

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hebraica (1506). Kimchi's grammar was printed at Naples in 1490 and was recognised as a standard work by Jewish and Christian scholars alike in the Middle Ages. In all Reuchlin possessed five of Kimchi's works including two grammar books and three exegetical treatises indicating how he valued the scholarship of the author. L. Geiger suggests Reuchlin's Hebrew teacher Jehiel Loans may have first introduced him to this classical work, but there is no evidence for it. W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, p. 57; & pp. 230–234. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 102–142. See the entry for 'David Kimchi' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 12, pp. 155–156.

167 The meaning of this Hebrew word '*sched*' (or '*shed*') appears to have a number of meanings among them 'ghost' or 'spirit'. (For this latter interpretation I am indebted to Ms Ann Koenig, formerly registrar at the University of Maryland, Schwäbisch Gmünd, and to her Jewish friends). W. Ehlers renders it as 'demons'. M. Diemling points out that this was a popular criticism of Judaism in the sixteenth century. See the article by Maria Diemling, 'Anthonius Margaritha on the "Whole Jewish Faith:" A sixteenth-century convert from Judaism and his depiction of the Jewish religion', p. 330. See also *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, here p. 35, and note 11.

168 'You are welcome'.

169 Grimm cites J. Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel* as one of the earliest sources for this term, 'ententeding' and 'enten-tagung' (ducks meeting). See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 3, col. 511.

170 This reference is to claims by the author, the Dominican monk Raimundus Martinus (Raymon Marti, ca. 1220–1284), that the Talmud contained statements such as that the Jews 'even now are prone to kill Christians, to hurl their children into pits and wells, and even to cut them to pieces, when they can do so secretly', in J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, p. 155. Reuchlin was well acquainted with Martini's work entitled *Pugio fidei adversus Mauros et Iudaeos* (Leipzig, 1687). It was completed in 1278 following the Disputation at Barcelona, a debate in 1263 between Jews and proselytising missionaries. In reality it was a polemical defence of the Christian religion against the strong arguments of the chief Jewish opponent

writes such scurrilous things about the Talmud in his *Pugione 3. par. dis. iij. c. xx* | that respectable people do not like to hear it. Similar expressions are Cij^{r} = VI^{r}
to be found in the books *Fortalitium fidei*,[171] and in Paul of Burgos's *Additiones*,[172] chapter 34 on Isaiah and 5 on Zechariah (*capituli xxxiiij, Jsaiae, et*

Nahmanides (1194/5–1270). The book was widely known and used throughout the Middle Ages in anti-Jewish missionary campaigns. It was given considerable credence as the author, apparently, was proficient in both Hebrew and Arabic and a renowned Biblical scholar. Most importantly for Reuchlin's argument, however, was that despite the polemical nature of *Pugio fidei*, Marti had also concluded that the Talmud, together with the Bible, could be used effectively to refute objections to Christological arguments by Jews. Christian disputants could therefore exploit Jewish books, though obviously false, to debate with them. Many of the arguments Marti used became the sources for Alfonsus de Espina's *Fortalitium fidei*. Robert Chazan: *Daggers of Faith*: *Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 115–136. Steven J. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*, pp. 64–74. Ina Willi-Plein and Thomas Plein (eds.): *Glaubensdolch und Messiasbeweis. Die Begegnung von Judentum, Christentum und Islam im 13. Jahrhundert in Spanien* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1980). J. Cohen: *The Frairs and the Jews*, pp. 129–169. Hans Georg von Mutius: *Die christlich-jüdische Zwangs-Disputation zu Barcelona* (Frankfurt am Main, 1982). For biographical details see the entry 'Raimund Martini' in: *LThK*, vol. 8, col. 976. See the entry for 'Nahmanides' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. Skolnik vol. 14, pp. 739–748. H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus- Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld* (*13.-20. Jh.*), pp. 290–307. Christopher Ocker, 'German Theologians and the Jews in the Fifteenth Century', in Dean Philip Bell & Stephen G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 56–65.

[171] *Fortalitium fidei* or the full title *Fortalitium fidei contra Judeos Saracenos et alios Christiane fidei inimicos* was written by the Spanish theologian Alfons de Spina († 1491?) and published in 1460. In earlier studies of him he is portrayed as a converted Jew, but more recent scholarship by H. Kamen suggests that the distortions and fabrications in his work show a complete ignorance of Semitic society. The book was probably written 1459–1461 in Valladolid and was directed against heretics, Jews, Muslims, and so called enemies of the Christian religion. It accused all 'conversos' (New Christians), i.e. those who converted from Islam or Judaism to Christianity of not being true Christians and aimed to have them excluded from all positions of authority. The book is divided into five chapters and to an extent based on the works of Raymon Marti. Reuchlin probably valued him as a scholar of Hebrew and for his exegesis of Biblical texts, but less for his vitriolic campaigns. The complete text has been published and edited by Steven J. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*: *Alphonso de Espina's Argument against the Jews in the Fortalitium fidei* (*c. 1464*). See also Henry Kamen: *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1985), p. 24. Marvin Perry and Frederick M. Schweitzer (eds.): *Jewish-Christian Encounters over the Centuries*: *Symbiosis, Prejudice, Holocaust, Dialogue* (New York, 1994), p. 179. H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 151, notes 19 and 31. H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus- Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld* (*13.-20. Jh.*), pp. 536–539.

[172] He refers to Paul of Burgos's (Salomon ben Levi/Pablo Santa Maria, 1350–1435) *Additiones* [*ad postillam litteralis magistri Nicolai de Lirai super totam Bibliam*, 1429–1431] which was written as a supplementary document to Nicholas of Lyre's *Postilla*. It was one of the

Zachariae quinto); and in Brother Petrus Nigri's[173] *Stern des Messias*. Johann Pfefferkorn,[174] the instigator of this case, also writes in a similar vein that the teaching of the Talmud is abominable and obscene and contains many defamatory and profane words.

One could reply to this by saying that no one has ever presented the other party's case in a proper and rightful manner. Now there is a well-known dictum that says, 'Hear both sides'. Thus it is a legal principle that no one should condemn or sentence a person before first conducting an inquiry and thoroughly investigating the issue; *xxiij. q. vlt. occident xv. q. vi. c. i. in fi.* And even if none of the contesting parties demand it, nor wish the judge to do so, nevertheless the magistrate should, on his own initiative, take every care and caution to establish the rights and wrongs of the accused party; *l. ij. C. de eden. et ibi glo. et Bart.* Therefore, whatever those above mentioned persons of our religion wrote against the Talmud[175] does not cause me

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most influential commentaries on the Bible in the Middle Ages. In the *Additiones* the author attempts to show his knowledge of the Talmud by contradicting those passages of Lyre's text, where his exposition follows the interpretation given by the Jewish Rabbinical scholar Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes (also known as Rashi, 1040–1105). He choses to ignore any form of metaphorical interpretation, in contrast to the expositions of the Bible where it is clear that some passages can not be considered in their literal translation. The examples chosen are taken randomly and mainly from anti-Jewish proselyte literature, in particular from Raymon Marti's *Pugio fidei*, as Paul publicly admits. He fails to identify clearly in the Talmud the sources for his attacks and refused to consider whether it might have value towards Christian exegetical scholarship. In 1267 he petitioned Pope Clement IV (1265–1268) to condemn the Talmud and requested the king of Spain to establish a commission to examine the Talmud for its anti-Christian content. The commission did not recommend the destruction of Jewish texts, but all references considered to be anti-Christian were excised. The members of the commission, however, were swayed by the rhetoric of the missionary friar Raymon Marti, who argues in *Pugio* against the destruction of Jewish texts because of their usefulness in missionary attempts at conversion.

See J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, pp. 174–195. Wolfgang Bunte: *Rabbinische Traditionen bei Nikolaus von Lyra: Ein Beitrag zur Schriftauslegung des Spätmittelalters* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), pp. 19–20. *LThk*, vol. 8 col. 230. J.H. Mundy: *Europe in the High Middle Ages 1150–1309*, p. 72. See also Christopher Ocker, 'German theologians and the Jews in the fifteenth century', in: D.P. Bell & S.G. Burnett (eds.): *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in sixteenth-century Germany*, pp. 33–65.

173 See note 108.

174 This reference is to Johannes Pfefferkorn's *Judenspiegel* (1507), See H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, folio Dr L2–L7, p. 237. Also Johannes Pfefferkorn: *The Jews' mirror* (*Judenspiegel*); translated by Ruth I. Cape with a historical introduction by Maria Diemling, p. 91.

175 These were theologians who took part in the 'debates' of the Talmud that in reality were investigations and book trials. Many authors of these polemical works had no knowledge of Hebrew.

to diverge from my opinion, for I know many of them never studied the Talmud. Thus I will not be deterred by their writings and discourses on this matter, but will follow the statute of Canon Law, in *ca. Neque quorumlibet distinc. ix*, which says, 'We are not obliged to follow any person's disputation or opinion, as if it were Holy Scripture or a codified law, irrespective of how Christian or well esteemed the person is held to be by others'.[176] For if the Talmud were to be burned, it would have been burned many hundreds of years ago,[177] as our forefathers were far more fervent Christians then than we are now. Yet as long as I can remember I have never read that any one of them who wrote against it, requested or even desired that it should be burned, with the exception of the above-mentioned, namely Brother Petrus Nigri[178] of the Preaching Order and the recently baptised Jew, Johannes Pfefferkorn, contemporaries of mine both of whom I have spoken with.[179] However, I do not blame or hold them in contempt for it, for they have acted out of fervour to God, but not with understanding, as St Paul says to the Romans 10.[180]

Those erudite scholars who were our predecessors were proficient in many languages, | and wrote so vitriolicly against the Talmud, yet they did not desire to burn or destroy it. For them it was like a noble hunter, such as I have often seen amongst great princes, and who knows full well, that when he chases a majestic stag with a crown of antlers across a meadow, it cannot escape. Yet he does not wish it to be lanced or shot just for the pleasure of killing it. He prefers to see it hunted rather than captured. Similarly the learned and wise take more pleasure in refuting the Talmud and its disciples by using knowledgeable words and sensible arguments. What honour would the tried masters of Christianity achieve and in what light would they appear if the Talmud had been burned and was no longer Cij^{v} = VI^{v}

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176 Reuchlin cites one of the major parts of the entire Canon Law Corpus. Friedrich Lotter, 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 65–88, here p. 71, and note 2. See *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, here p. 37. See also the entry for '*Corpus iuris canonici*' in: *LMA*, vol. 3 (1986), cols. 263–270.

177 Reuchlin used his researches of early literature to show that the Church adopted a more tolerant approach than his contemporaries to Jewish books in its early history, and therefore his arguments for their preservation were legitimate.

178 Petrus Nigri, *Stern des Meschiah*, 11 tract, chapter. 8. See *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, here p. 37 and note 2.

179 Pfefferkorn first met Reuchlin at his house in Stuttgart in August or September 1509. I have been unable to establish when Reuchlin spoke to Petrus Nigri. See also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 177*, Reuchlin to Zyprian von Serntein, pp. 181–185, here p. 184, and note 4. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 134, and pp. 209–226.

180 Rom. 10, 2.

extant. If the book, which they opposed, were no longer in existence, no one would know hereafter whether their arguments and opposing discourses were true or erroneous.

This is the meaning of the above-mentioned sermon that St Paul[181] writes to the Corinthians: 11[182] 'There must be factions[183] among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognised'. Therefore, as I have already said, the more absurd and unseemly the Talmud is, as our Christian writers say, the more I have wished it should be preserved as a target for our students and theologians, at which they should practice "shooting daily" and thereby become bolder and more agile in their debating contests with unbelievers. For: 'One climbs the fence where it is lowest', says the foot soldier; *.xiij. distinc. nervi*.[184] For if it were as disdainful and absurd as is asserted, then our theologians and scholars should soon conquer and triumph over it.

That reminds me of the famous warrior Agesilaus,[185] the king of Lacedaemon, about whom the noble, wise knight Xenophon[186] wrote a beautiful little book[187] in Greek. He, together with the cream of all liberal arts, Plato,[188]

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181 This was the first of his major arguments from the Scriptures to show why the Jews could not be considered heretics and therefore their books could not be legally confiscated or destroyed.

182 1 Cor. 11, 19. Reuchlin uses the Latin abbreviation '*ad Corin. xi*'. There is a transcription error in A. Leinz—von Dessauer's, (ed., 1965): *Gutachten*, see here, p. 51 "Corin 6".

183 See Commentary, p. 58 on Reuchlin's use of the word 'factions'. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 46–47.

184 This is a reference to a section of Julius Caesar's *Gallic War*. I have not found the exact wording Reuchlin uses, but in chapter twelve of Book II reference is made to a high mound being built in order to attack a city surrounded by a defensive high wall. The wording in Reuchlin's edition was conceivably different from modern versions. See C. Julius Caesar, C. Caesar ' s *Gallic War*. Transl. by W.A. McDevitte. Transl. W.S. Bohn.

185 Agesilaus (444–360 BC), King of Sparta. In 396 he captured Phrygia in Asia Minor, but was unable to check the increasing power of the Persian navy and thus failed to maintain Sparta's hegemony. The account of Agesilaus appeared in Xenophon's works.

186 Xenophon (427/8 – ca. 354 BC) was an Athenian aristocrat and associate of Plato. He later became a military general and served under Agesilaus. One of the most prolific writers of antiquity, he wrote descriptions of the military campaign in Asia and of the changing political fortunes in Greece during the fourth century. See Karl Preisendanz, 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', in Manfred Krebs, and Hermann Kling (eds.): *Johannes Reuchlin 1455–1522*: *Festgabe seiner Vaterstadt Pforzheim zur 500. Wiederkehr seines Geburtstages* (revised ed. Sigmaringen, 1994), pp. 35–82, here p. 61.

187 Reuchlin's reference is to part of Xenophon's major work *Hellenica* which consisted of seven distinct books. See Xenophon: *Hellenika* III, 4, 18–19. For an English translation see Xenophon: *A History of My Times* (*Hellenica*): *Transl.* by Rex Warner, *and Introduced* by George Cawkwell (Harmondsworth, 1966), (repr. 1981), here III, 4, 18–19.

188 Plato's *Dialogues and Letters* had been translated from Greek into Latin by Marsilio

were both students of that erudite master Socrates. In it he says that at the time when Agesilaus drew up his army against the Persians, he ordered the officers and ensigns to strip the clothes off any Barbarians they captured, drive them to their cities and sell them naked on the market. His intention was, that when his soldiers would see the naked enemy, with their white | skin and obese bodies, they would be inspired and view fighting them no different to battling with women and from such disdain derive powerful manly courage. Ciij^{r} = VII^{r}

Many eminent people regard this to be a remarkable war ruse and a sign of great wisdom. It was much more beneficial to him to let the enemy be sold naked than to kill them, for it motivated his army and his allies and caused them to be braver in the field. That's enough said to the first reason of my counsel which is based on the words of St Paul when he says: 'There must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognised'.[189]

Secondly, I base my counsel on the Holy Gospel that the Talmud should not be burned. For Our Lord Jesus Christ said to the Jews in John 5:[190] 'Search the Scriptures because you think in them you have eternal life; and it is they who bear witness to me'.[191] As this quotation is to be the basis of my counsel[192] I am obliged, first and foremost, to throw light on the literal meaning of these words to pre-empt possible arguments by opponents. First God says, 'search'. In the Greek language, the original language of the Holy Gospel, the term given is 'ἐρευνάτε' (*ereunate*).[193] This word has two roots as the erudite schoolmasters' of Greek state. The first part of the word means 'ἐρώ' (*ero*) from 'ἐρωτώ' (*eroto*), meaning 'to question' or 'search'[194] and the second

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Ficino in 1453, and Reuchlin would surely have been made aware of this in his talks with the other humanists he met at the Platonic academy at Florence. See James Hankins: 'The Myth of the Platonic Academy of Florence' in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44 (1991), pp. 429–475. See also B. Price: *Medieval Thought*, p. 74.

189 1 Cor. 11, 19.

190 John 5, 39–40.

191 He emphasises the importance of this passage by citing it in German rather than in Latin, the language in which it was written in the Bible. See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 45–46, 102–107.

192 The writings mentioned in the Biblical text were interpreted by Christian exegetes to include only those of the Old and New Testament.

193 The term occurs frequently in the Greek version of the New Testament where it has been translated to mean 'assume'. See Horst Balz (ed.): *Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 1, (Berlin, 1980), p. 823. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', pp. 57–70. See *CHB*, vol. 1, pp. 1–66.

194 After the fall of Constantinople (1453) many Greek emigrants came to the Holy Roman

one, 'εύνή' (*eune*), means 'chamber or a hall where one rests', as if it were a school,[195] for 'school' means 'leisure for learning'.[196] And if the two words are combined to one word 'ἐρευνώ',[197] it then means 'to question, to study and to search in the school with leisure, and with a contemplative spirit.' It is as if Our Lord Jesus wanted to say: 'In the schools you should dispute from the Scriptures in which you believe you have the eternal life and which also bear witness to me.'

Thus, the Lord says in the above-mentioned Scriptures, 'because you think you have eternal life', but he does not say 'because you truly know you have eternal life'. The term, σοκεῖ[198] at that point in the text means 'to hold something true which is not', and in German means, 'wenen' (to think).[199] In this way he differentiates between the books of the Bible and the books
Ciij^{v} = VII^{v} of the masters.[200] For he had | taught them previously that they should truly know, and not merely suppose, that in the Bible you have eternal life, Luke 10.[201] When a lawyer stood up amongst the people and said, 'Master what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law'? And he answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and

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Empire and taught their language to students. The grammar textbook mainly used, '*Erotomata*' (Questions), was that by Manuel Chrysoloras (1350–1415). It was based on a form of question and answer system of learning. Reuchlin used this book in his lectures on Greek at Tübingen University and hence the name of the source here would indicate his scholarly sources. Chrysoloras's original Greek grammar was not comprehensive, however, and it is more likely that Reuchlin used Constantine Lascaris's *Erotomata*. An improved edition of this work was published by his friend and fellow humanist Aldus Manutius in 1494. Manutius was one of the scholars well acquainted with Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and in 1491 received a Greek copy of Homer from him. Manutius was also to publish some of Reuchlin's works in 1498 and planned to publish a trilingual Greek, Latin and Hebrew version of the Bible. See Martin Davies: *Aldus Manutius*: *Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice* (London, 1995), pp. 11–52. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 20*, Petrus Jakobi to Reuchlin, pp. 67–69, here p. 69, and note 7.

195 The German term 'schul' used here could mean 'school' or 'study' and is derived from the Latin word '*schola*'. In the original text he used the Greek term which has several meanings, among them 'an intermission of work', 'freedom to learn', and 'leisure for learning'. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 15, cols. 1933–1934.

196 Here Reuchlin provides the definition 'for school means leisure to learn' (*nam scola dicitur vacatio*).

197 He uses the Greek term, *ereunate*.

198 Here again he uses a Greek term, *dokei*.

199 On the meaning of the term 'wenen', see the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 27, cols. 657–663.

200 The 'books of the masters' was again a reference to the Rabbinic tradition, where a distinction is made between the transmission of knowledge to the elders of the Jews and the interpretation of its meaning. See also J. Faur: *Homo Mysticus—A Guide to Maimonides's Guide for the Perplexed*, pp. 27–29.

201 Luke 10, 25–28.

with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself'. And he said to him, 'You have answered right; do this, and you will live'. Moses had previously said this to the Jews Deut. 30:[202] 'See, I have set before you this day life and death', etc. Thus they were convinced that eternal life was to be found in the Bible.

Moreover, they also had other books which were not part of the Bible, but were keenly composed by their masters and rabbis. Our Lord called these 'Traditions',[203] Matt. 15.[204] They wrongly assumed that in those they would also find eternal life, and that was not true. For Our Lord Jesus spoke against that and gave them to understand they were blind, though they maintained they could see, John 9.[205] Therefore he repudiated their writings and their way of life, in the many utterances he made against the scribes and priests, Matt. 23.[206]

One can conclude, therefore, that when Our Lord Jesus said: 'Search the Scriptures,[207] because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they' as if he really wanted to explain to the masters of the scripts, from which the Talmud was compiled, and wherein they assumed they had eternal life, that he meant their writings were to be taken together with the Bible. This is shown by the use of that little word, 'and' or 'also', as if he wished to say: the writings of your scribes and scholars, from which the Talmud is compiled and collated, also bear witness to me, as well as the Bible.

And that is the truth. For the more the Talmud rebuffs us, so much the greater and stronger is the proof for us that our Christian faith is to be found in it. Therefore Christ commanded that these writings should be assiduously studied and disputed in the schools[208] and should not be burned.

I will just take one argument from them to disprove all the points the Jews may put forward. They say: We certainly do believe that Jesus came, but | we do not believe, however, that he is the true Christ, for the Christ who is prophesied in the Bible has not come yet.[209] Now if I cannot find it Ciiij^{r} = VIII^{r}

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202 Deut. 30, 19.

203 In the text he uses the Latin term, *traditiones*.

204 Matt. 15, 1–4.

205 John 9, 41.

206 Matt. 23, 1–39.

207 John 5, 39. This Bible citation was one of his strongest arguments.

208 The 'schools' referred to are the debates within the schools of philosophy and hence the universities.

209 He refers to the Christological debate on the advent of the Messiah which had gone on since almost the foundation of Christianity, but was as current in Reuchlin's day as it was in previous centuries.

clearly stated in the Bible that he has come, then I can prove it from their Talmud. Their masters have written that the Law of Moses will end four thousand years after the creation of the world. Then the law of the Messiah shall begin and last for two thousand years, for the world shall only exist six thousand years, just as it was created in six days.[210] Those are their words, as stated in the Talmud, which the disciples of Elijah are supposed to have said. Now the Jews count the present year as 5271, since the creation of the world. Thus 13 hundred years have passed according to their calculation. Therefore the true Messiah or Christ must have come thirteen hundred years ago.[211]

It is immaterial to me whether the children or the disciples of Elijah the prophet truly said it or not, for I am able to prove that our Christian faith is confirmed solely by their very own words and they cannot deny it.[212] And there are likewise countless points that I could prove to them from the Talmud, on which their hearts hang and to which they verbally lay claim.

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[210] This is the only direct citation from the Talmud that he uses in the entire document.

[211] It is unclear how Reuchlin arrived at the figure of thirteen hundred years. In his *Tütsch missiue* he writes of fourteen hundred years, which G. Kisch suggests is derived from taking the date of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in the year AD 70, to the date of writing the pamphlet (1507), as the base of his calculations. Jewish calendars are set at 3,761 years before the establishment of the Julian calendar in 46 BC and the modified Gregorian calendar of 1582. Kisch also makes the point that immediately before the numbers are mentioned in that text, Reuchlin referred to the famous Jewish exegete Rashi, and it is therefore likely that he used Rashi's references to arrive at the dates mentioned. F. Lotter points out that the reference to the Mosaic Law losing its authority after 4,000 years had already appeared in Alanus ab Insullis's (Alan of Lille, *1120 †1202) work, *Summa quadripartite*, and was based on the *Babylonian Gemara*, in particular the 'Sanhedrin' tractate. I believe, however, he used as his source Nicholas of Lyre's (1300) *Quaestio de Christi adventu*, where Lyre discussed the references to the Messiah in Hebrew texts. Lyre, a Hebrew scholar, was held in great esteem by Reuchlin for his studies on the mystical and literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Like Reuchlin, he pointed out the usefulness of Hebrew texts in the study of the Bible and in proselytism, though he maintained the Jews would always reject conversion attempts for theological and economic reasons. See J. Reuchlin: *Tütsch Missiue*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 9. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 73, and note 9. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 100, and note 32. B. Blumenkranz, 'Anti-Jewish polemics and legislation in the Middle Ages: literary fiction or reality' in: *The Journal of Jewish Studies*, 15 (1964), pp. 125–140. F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 73 and n. 4. J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, pp. 180–195. See also the entry for 'Jewish and Christian calendars' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 4, pp. 354–360.

[212] Reuchlin uses a rather spurious argument here in his efforts to discredit Jewish sources, as he draws on Cabbalistic literature for his source. It contains references to a future Redeemer, which he was aware of through his knowledge of the Cabbala. He probably chose to ignore citing his references as it would defeat his argument, knowing the ambivalence in the acceptance of Cabbalistic arguments. See Blumenkranz: ibid; p. 138.

Now there is no stronger proof than one's opponent's confession, or when such a person confirms the truth in public or in a legal statement. This is the principle in jurisprudence known as a 'conclusive presumption of law which stands until it is lawfully refuted',[213] (*praesumptio*[*nem*] *iuris et de iure*) which is so highly respected that it becomes unnecessary to hear the other person's evidence; *tex. et glo. in l. antique* .§. *sed. si quidem. C. ad. S.C. vellei. ubi. etiam Bald. in ver. tertio quero utrum ista confessio*.

Somebody might counter and say, Doctor Reuchlin, you have previously said that the Talmud was composed more than 150 years after the birth of Christ. How can anybody therefore truthfully maintain that Christ meant the scholars of the Talmud when He said: 'Search the scriptures, etc.' To that objection I answer, with the words of the honourable father and erudite lord, lord Paul, Bishop of Burgos and Archchancellor of Spain, who says in the preface of the book, called *Scrutinium scripturarum*:[214] 'That before Our Dear Lord's death and long before his birth, the Jewish scholars and masters wrote and taught a lot [of material] which they compiled piece by piece in special books and manuscripts'. However, after Christianity began to become widespread, long after our Dear Lord's death, | they came together Ciiij^{v} =VIII^{v}
on the instructions of rabbi Moses of Egypt, as it says in his Deuteronomy (*Deuteronomium*),[215] and collated the writings of their old scholars and teachers of the law into a book or compilation, in the same order, shape, and form as it is now. They called this collection of writings and the masters' teachings, the 'Talmud'. At least that is what our Christian scholars say and write about it. But, however, as Christ commanded[216] we should dispute on it and use it as proof of his coming; therefore it is not to be burned.

Thirdly, I base my counsel on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God himself set and placed this very tree in Paradise, Genesis 2,[217] and therefore it is not to be plucked out by any human being, for it is forbidden by God, as it says, Deut. 20,[218] 'You shall not destroy its trees, by wielding an axe against them, for you may eat of them, but you shall not cut them down'. And although Adam and Eve ate death from it, God did not tear it out nor burn it, but left it standing till the present time, as we experience

213 My translation of the Latin citation.

214 Paulus Burgensis: *Dialogus qui vocatur scrutinium scripturarum* (Mantua, 1475), p. (A^{v}). See the reference in: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 40, and note 4.

215 Deut. 1,13.

216 Using a command given by Jesus he adduces greater authority for his own argument.

217 Gen. 2,9.

218 Deut. 20,19.

daily.[219] Now, although many of our Christian writers say there is a lot of evil written in the Talmud, nevertheless, it is not evil to read and familiarise oneself with it, not that we want to emulate it, but that we may perceive more readily what is good and adhere to it; *xxxvij. distin. qui de mensa*.[220] In his book 'On sophistical refutations' (*De sophisticis elenchis*)[221] Aristotle says: 'Knowledge of evil matters is not evil, but good and honourable'. What good could or might Moses have learnt from the Egyptians, who had adopted all kinds of idolatry, and held cats, dogs, snakes and vipers for their gods, as Saint Athenagoras[222] wrote to the two Roman emperors Marcus Aurelius Antoninus[223] and Lucius Aurelius Commodus[224] when he sent them

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[219] There are numerous allegorical references to 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil' (Deut. 20,19) and to the 'tree of life' (Gen. 2.9). The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was believed to confer wisdom. Reuchlin's allegory could be interpreted to mean that knowledge or wisdom is not limited in time and should be available to all generations. A. Leinz—v. Dessauer points out that Reuchlin seems to have had a particular liking for allegory. See Leinz-von Dessauer, ed., (1965): *Gutachten*, p. 114, and note 23. See also the entry for 'Baum der Erkenntnis' in: *LThK*, vol. 2, cols. 67–68, and in the *RSV*, p. 3, and note 15.

[220] Here he qualifies his arguments by citing a quotation from St Jerome which is to be found in Gratian's code of Canon Law. See F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 73, and note 37.

[221] Reuchlin uses one of Aristotle's refutation arguments to justify the existence of evil. 'Evils are good: for what needs to be is good, and evils must needs be.' For what needs to be has a double meaning: it means what is inevitable, as often is the case with evils, too (for evil of some kind is inevitable), while on the other hand we say of good things as well that they 'must be'. See Aristotle: *De sophisticis elenchis* 177b.

[222] Athenagoras was a second-century Greek philosopher and convert to Christianity but further details of his life are unknown. In his well-known *Legatio pro Christianis*, (ca. AD 177) (Plea for the Christians or Embassy for the Christians), he argues why Christians do not recognize the traditional gods of their rulers nor those of the cities and why they refuse to venerate the pagan images. It was addressed to the joint rulers, the emperors Marcus Aurelius and his son Lucius Aurelius Commodus in his efforts to come to terms with them and prevent their planned persecution of Christians on charges of idolatry and of leading immoral lives. See Athenagoras: *Supplicatio pro Christianis* 1 A: PG 6 892. For an English translation, Athenagoras: *Legatio pro Christianis*, edited by Miroslav Marcovich (Berlin, 1990), p. 8, L 14.1–20. Also here Andreas Löw: *Hermes Trismegistos als Zeuge der Wahrheit*. Die christliche Hermetikrezeption von Athenagoras bis Laktanz (Berlin, 2002), pp. 41–46.

[223] Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (AD 121–180) was Roman Emperor from AD161–180 and an adherer of stoicism. He was considered a good military campaigner and a humane administrator, though during his reign numerous Christians were martyred. The Christian religion was proscribed as were all other religions other than those of the Emperor, but no specific anti-Christian legislation was introduced. See the entry for' Marcus Aurelius' in: *LThK*, vol. 7, cols. 9–10.

[224] Lucius Aurelius Commodus (AD 161–192) succeeded his father Marcus Aurelius as Roman Emperor from AD180–192. Unlike his father he became known for his flagitious crimes and was eventually murdered by one of his slaves. He adopted henotheism as a form of

an official letter and as a legate on behalf of the Christians. For what purpose did Daniel learn and gain instruction in the sciences of the superstitious, defiled, and idolatrous Chaldeans, Dan. 1 etc.,[225] of whom it says in Isa. 48:[226] 'Flee from the Chaldeans'. Furthermore, Solomon was praised for his wisdom, which surpassed the wisdom of the Egyptians and of all the people of the East, 3 Kings 4.[227] And there is the proverb: 'Are you wiser than Daniel?' Ezek., 28.[228] On all of the above cited, Canon Law says, 'The Jewish youths in Chaldea, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah did not wish to eat or drink | from the table of the king of Babylon so that their consciences would not be defiled'.[229] Now if they had considered the wisdom and skills of Babylonia to be sinful, they would never have agreed to study what did not befit them. 'But they did study, not to emulate, but to scrutinise and refute them'. That is the end of the quotation from the aforecited Canon Law.[230] Dr = IXr

We may conclude from this text, therefore, that we can read and study good and evil in juxtaposition so that with discerning arguments the evil text can be corrected, and the good, that lies within it, like roses amongst thorns, may be found and used to study holy doctrine; *c. turbat. ea dis*.

Now there is no one who could or would say of the Talmud that it contains only evil and that nothing good can be learned from it, for it contains the four superior sciences, and many good medicinal recipes and valuable knowledge of herbs and roots.[231] Furthermore, it contains many good legal judgements, which have been collected from all over the world by experienced Jews. And in theology, the Talmud is in many instances our handbook against the misconceived beliefs of the Jews. This is evident in the Bishop of

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religion, but was tolerant of other beliefs and under his reign the number of influential Roman families who became Christians increased. See the entry for 'Commodus' in: *LThK*, vol. 3, cols. 23–24.

225 Dan. 1,3 ff.

226 Isa. 48, 20.

227 1 Kings 4, 30. Reuchlin refers to the Third Book of Kings in the Vulgate version. In earlier Bible translations the First Book of Kings was listed as the Third Book of Kings. Modern versions include it in the First Book of Daniel.

228 Ezek. 28,3.

229 Daniel 1, 6–8.

230 Here he qualifies his arguments by citing a quotation of St Jerome found in Gratian's code on Canon Law. See F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 73, and note 37.

231 The scope of the Talmud included themes from all areas of life with references to medicinal remedies and agricultural laws as part of its listings. Reuchlin indicates his awareness of the contents of the Talmud in spite of being unable to procure a copy. See R. Mayer: *Der Talmud*, pp. 323–332; 527–528.

Burgos's books on the Bible which he wrote in a praiseworthy and Christian manner and in his *Scrutinium* where he clearly defends our faith using arguments from the Talmud. Alone in the first part of his book 'Scrutiny of the Scriptures' (*Scrutinium scripturarum*)[232] I noticed and counted, that on more than fifty occasions he resorted to the Talmud in his arguments against the Jews, not to mention the second part of the same book, where he drew upon several passages of the Talmud in his discourses for us Christians. In the preface he writes that the glosses and statements in the Talmud are so presented by the scholars that we can extract strong and decisive arguments from them for use against the Jews, for sometimes their masters have predicted and prophesied matters, though inadvertently, concerning divine mystery, as Caiaphas did, John 11.[233] Therefore, he writes in the aforecited preface, 'the statement of the adversary is strong evidence'. He writes in a similar vein on the whole Bible, and wherever it is evident that the Jews oppose us, he disputes with them, using arguments from the Talmud in order to support our contention. Anybody who has read his work cannot deny this. The other erudite scholars of the Holy Scriptures, who understand
D^{v} = IX^{v} Hebrew, do likewise. |

They consult the Talmud when they want to dispute with the Jews and argue with them by citing from the Talmud. For example the praiseworthy doctor of Holy Scriptures, of the barefoot order,[234] resorts skilfully to the Talmud both for himself and for our use in his book *Fortalitium fidei*[235] that

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[232] In *Scrutinium*, Paul of Burgos presents a dialogue between a teacher and his pupil who instructs him in Christianity, using traditional anti-Jewish apologetics, and uses the Talmud to support his arguments. The title of the work was partially based on the Biblical reference in John 5, 39, where it says 'search the scriptures' and where Paul interpreted the passage to include the Jewish books. See the entry for 'Paulus von Burgos' in Friedrich Wilhelm Bautz and Traugott Bautz (eds.): *Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, vol. 7 (1994), pp. 57–60. Lukyn A. Williams: *Adversus Judaeos. A Birds-Eye View of Christian Apologiae until the Renaissance.* (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 267–276. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 102–107.

[233] John 11,49–52.

[234] The Missionary and Preaching Order of Franciscans was frequently referred to in the Germanic lands as 'The barefoot order'. They followed a rule of extreme poverty, and travelling barefoot became a sign of their total rejection of worldly possessions. See the entry for 'Barfüßerorden' in: *LThK*, vol. 1, col. 1244. Richard W. Southern: *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London, 1970, repr. London, 1990), pp. 278–299. Ruedi Imbach, and Ernst Tremp (eds.): *Zur geistigen Welt der Franziskaner im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg/Switzerland, 1995). Petra Seegets: *Passionstheologie und Passionsfrömmigkeit im ausgehenden Mittelalter: Der Nürnberger Franziskaner Stephan Fridolin* (*gest. 1498*) *zwischen Kloster und Stadt* (Tübingen, 1998).

[235] Reuchlin introduces the testimony of Alfons de Spina to support his argument that the Talmud should be preserved. If theologians such as de Spina maintained that sections

he composed in Spain, especially in the third book of the *Fortalitium* as if he wanted to stab the Jews with their own knife. The learned Dr. Nicholas of Lyre,[236] a real jewel of the barefoot order, does likewise, not alone in the whole Bible where he is confronted with it, but also in a special book against the Jews that begins: 'First the question must be posed which of the writings that we received from the Jews'. (*Primo queritur utrum ex scripturis receptis a iudeis etc.*,). There he writes: 'Although the Talmud and the glosses of the Jewish teachers are in error, for the most part, nevertheless we can use them to argue forcefully against them',[237] cited verbatim (*haec ille*). The other doctors and masters of our Christian faith have written likewise, particularly those who have converted from Judaism to Christianity, as for example the

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of it were invaluable in conversion campaigns to convince Jewish scholars of their mistaken beliefs, then surely its destruction and prohibition could not be sanctioned. See Alfons de Spina: *Fortalitium fidei* (1494), *liber tertius*, *considerata secunda*, *LXXIX*, reference cited in: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999), *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 42, and note 5. Also Steven J. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*: *Alphonso de Espina's Argument against the Jews in the Fortalitium fidei* (*c. 1464*).

[236] Nicholas of Lyre (1270–1349), was a member of the Franciscan Order. He was one of the most perceptive Biblical exegetes of his day and one of the few Christian Hebraists who used Jewish exegetes, especially Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes (1040–1105), to aid him in interpreting the symbolism and allegory of Scripture. Lyre acknowledges the great debt to him. In his major anti-Jewish work, *Postilla litteralis super Biblia*, he states that many passages in the Bible cannot always be understood literally and any speculation on these could be harmful to their true meaning. His major achievement was to redirect the exegesis of the Bible away from popular apocryphal representations and return to an understanding of the literary sense of the Scriptures. Over 700 manuscripts of the *Postilla* appeared in the years between 1350 and 1450. Later it became the first exegetical work to be printed with over a hundred copies appearing up to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Reuchlin sees him as an ally, supporting his argument for the preservation of Jewish books, as Lyre emphasised that Christians should have knowledge of such Jewish books to vigorously dispute with Jewish believers. However, Reuchlin chose to ignore Lyre's texts where he accused the Jews of distorting contents of the Scriptures, and when his writings became an integral part of polemical debate with Jews. He held him in high regard as he mentions in the text. This emanated from Lyre's knowledge of Hebrew, in particular his study of Hebrew orthography. See the entry for 'Nikolaus von Lyra' in: *LMA*, vol. 6 (1993), col. 1185. Also J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, pp. 174–195. B. Blumenkranz: 'Anti-Jewish polemics and legislation in the Middle Ages: literary fiction or reality', pp. 125–140.

[237] This refers to Nicholas of Lyre's *Quaestio de Christi adventu*, in which Lyre sets out to establish whether the writings accepted as authoritative by the Jews could be used to prove the Church's teaching on the Trinity that Jesus was both God and man, and that the advent of the messiah had occurred. The work appeared as an appendix to his *Postilla* in 1309, but was subsequently revised in 1330. The actual passage states 'although the texts of this sort, i.e. the Talmud and the glosses of the Hebrew scholars are for the most part false, we can still argue with them effectively against them, since they are accepted by them in the manner described'. See J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, p. 181. B. Blumenkranz: 'Anti-Jewish polemics and legislation in the Middle Ages: literary fiction or reality', p. 137.

honourable teachers Petrus Alfonsi[238] and master Alfonsus Conversus[239] in his *libri de bellis dei*, master Johannes de Podico[240] and master Jerome,[241] and others. One can conclude from all of them that the Talmud is not a totally evil tree that cannot bear good fruit and which therefore should be cut down

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[238] Petrus Alfonsi (Alphonsus) (1062?-1140?), also called Moses Sephardi. He was an apostate Jew who grew up in a mixed culture of Jews, Muslims and Christians in Spain. His studies on religion included the mysticism of Judaism, and he maintained that the Trinity of the Christian religion was revealed in the Tetragrammaton. Reuchlin probably refers here to Alphonsi's major anti-Jewish work, *Dialogi in quibus impiae Judaeorum opiniones refutantur*, which mentions the captivity of the Jews and purports to prove from reason and authority why Judaism is to be rejected. Due to his knowledge of Hebrew his work was considered to be a valuable weapon against Judaism and it influenced the writings of many other anti-Jewish writers, among them Abner of Burgos. His writing, on the mysticism of Judaism would also have been a valuable source for Reuchlin's study of the Cabbala, though no direct quotation is to be found in the text. L. Williams: *Adversus Judaeos*, pp. 233–240. S. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*, pp. 58–62. J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, pp. 27–31. See the entry for 'Petrus Alfonsi' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 16, p. 21.

[239] Alfonsus Conversus (ca. 1270–1347). This is probably a reference to Abner of Burgos alias Alfonsus de Burgos, alias Alfonso of Valladolid, and author of the polemical work *Liber de bellis Dei*. Some of his works are no longer extant, among them this particular book which was originally written in Hebrew. It is now only known through references to the Latin version in other polemical works. A Spanish translation entitled '*Libro de las batalhas de Dios*' was registered in a monastery in Spain in the sixteenth century. *Reuchlin* probably quotes here from Pablo de Santa Maria's *Scrutinium scripturarum* and not from Abner's original work. He does not mention his source. S. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*, pp. 84–87. See the entry for 'Alfonsus' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 1, pp. 264–265. P. Browe: *Die Judenmission im Mittelalter und die Päpste*, pp. 78; 104; 120. H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (13.-20. Jh.)*, pp. 377–378.

[240] John de Podico (John of Seville), also called John of Spain or Johannes Hispalensis or Avendath, had taken part in the dispute at Tortosa (1413–1414). Details of his life are unclear, but research has established that he was a translator of Arabic works on astronomy and medicine. Reuchlin mentions him as an example of a scholar who converted from Judaism to Christianity. Lynn Thorndike maintains Reuchlin is following an erroneous tradition by ascribing to him various manuscripts that he did not write. He maintains that John of Spain and the Jewish convert and scholar Ibn Daud are identical. This point is disputed by other researchers who state there were two distinct authors, but who may have worked together in translating some Arabic texts. Lynn Thorndike, 'John of Seville', in: *Speculum*, 34 (1959), pp. 20–38. M. Robinson, 'The history and myths surrounding Johannes Hispalensis', in: *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 4, 80 (2003) pp. 443–470.

[241] Master Jerome (de Santa Fide), also known as Jeronimo de Santa Cruz or 'Master Jerome the convert', took part in the major polemical debate at Tortosa (1413–1414) between representatives of the Church and Jewish leaders from Aragon on methods to expedite the conversion of Jews. Reuchlin's use of these officials to support his argument for the preservation of the Talmud is stretching the truth, for at Tortosa it was agreed that the Talmud should be burned by the Inquisition for promoting a false doctrine of the Messiah and of not being in accordance with the text of the Old Testament. That he was unaware of this decision is unlikely considering his knowledge of Judaism, but he may have chosen to ignore it, considering the decrees made at Tortosa as not lawfully binding due to their tendentious

and burned, Matthew third chapter (*Matthaei tertio capitulo*),[242] but that it has much that is admirable, and those who understand it can obtain a lot of good from it, as you have heard above. For as St Jerome writes to Athleta,[243] 'It is great wisdom to search for gold in excrement'.[244]

If those who do not understand it are angered by it, then they have only themselves to blame and not the book. The goats eat bitter pasture but give sweet milk, and from the one same flower that the bees suck their sweet honey the spiders suck their painful poison. Neither the bloom nor the plant is the culprit for this, but the characteristic and nature of the animal. Equally there are people that are malevolent by nature, who convert honourable words into abject opinions. On the other hand there are good people who turn inept words into commendable opinions. As well as these, there are also many unintelligent, common, and simple people who do not understand sophisticated matters and have only a literal understanding of Scripture. Just as | the Emperor Julian[245] assumed, in the books he wrote against us Christians, that almost the entire Bible was literal in meaning, and hence expounded and twisted the words to give them an unworthy and evil significance. Saint Cyril[246] countered this in the many texts he composed against Dij^{r} = X^{r}

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content. H.-M. Kirn: *Das Bild vom Juden im Deutschland des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts dargestellt an den Schriften Johannes Pfefferkorns*, p. 136, and note 67. See the entry for 'Tortosa Disputa de T.' in: *LThK*, vol. 10, cols. 259–260.

242 Matt. 3, 10.

243 He quotes from St Jerome's *Letter to Laeta* in AD 403. See Jerome Ep. 107 12 *Ad Laetam* PL 22 877. The orthography of the name Laeta differs from other texts. Laeta wrote to Jerome from Rome requesting advice on how to educate her infant daughter Paula. Jerome provided detailed instructions on what she should read and write and how to interpret the Gospels. In the long text Jerome uses the phrase in chapter 12, 'and it requires infinite discretion to look for gold in the midst of mud'.

244 Grimm points out that the use of the word excrement (kot) was frequently used in sixteenth-century writings to contrast gold with the non-ephemeral spiritual value of holiness. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 11, col. 1894.

245 The Roman Emperor Julian (Julianus Flavius Claudius AD 332–363) was given the name 'Apostate' probably by his Christian opponents. Many of the privileges gained by Christians under the Emperor Constantine were abrogated. He wrote several works opposing Christianity, and here Reuchlin refers to Julian's *Letter against the Galileans*. St Cyril (Kyrillos, AD 412–444), Patriarch of Alexandria, wrote a number of polemic works in opposition to his policies and from these the term 'apostate' was added to Julian's name. See Rowland Smith: *Julian's Gods*: *Religion and Philosophy in the Thought and Action of Julian the Apostate* (London, 1995), pp. 179–218.

246 Reuchlin possessed several works of St Cyril, among them a fourteenth-century manuscript which he received on permanent loan from the Dominicans at Basle. These texts which included works by Athanasius (AD 296–373), John of Damascus (AD 675–749) and Theodoret (AD 393–466) were part of John of Ragusa's thirteenth-century library that had

him and explained that the statements should not always be understood literally. Saint Jerome wrote similarly, in a sermon which he held on Holy Saturday night, namely: 'What is more scandalous in Holy Scripture than to say that God commanded the holy prophet Hosea[247] to marry a whore; and that Judah[248] had sexual relations with his own daughter-in-law Tamar and made her pregnant; and that the holy king David[249] defiled Bathsheba by his adultery; and that Onan,[250] Judah's son, threw his seed on the ground so that he could not procreate. If one were to interpret these passages literally, they and the Holy Scripture would be mocked and rejected as dung and excrement both by the heathens and by all unbelievers'[251] cited verbatim (*haec ille*). There is a lot more of the same vein in it, as everyone can read for himself. Thus Freidank[252] has rightly said:

'One man is called bad, the other good,[253]
But in essence, both are misunderstood'.[254]

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been given to the monastery following his death. Some of these authors' works Reuchlin later translated into Latin. He also possessed several acts of the Council of Ephesus (AD 431) where St Cyril had led the dispute with Nestorius. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 69. David Christie-Murray: *A History of Heresy* (London, 1976) (repr. Guernsey, 1990), pp. 63–66, and pp. 73–74. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 206*, Reuchlin to Jakob Lemp, pp. 318–332, here p. 331, and note 55. R. van den Broek: *From Poimandres to Jacob Böhme*: *Gnosis*, *Hermeticism*, *and the Christian tradition* (Amsterdam, 2000), pp. 136–138.

247 Hos. 1, 2.

248 Gen. 38, 15–24.

249 2 Sam. 11, 2–5.

250 Gen. 38, 9.

251 He cites a direct quote from St Jerome's letter See: Jerome, *De exodo*, *in vigilia Paschae* in: CCL 78 536–541, here 539.

252 Freidank is the author of a collection of German epigrams and proverbs in couplet form which appeared in a thirteenth-century manuscript called *Bescheidenheit*, ('Experience'), meaning that the wisdom of the world is derived from experience. Little is known about the author, but from his writings he appears to have favoured imperial law rather than the influence and power of local princes. His liberal views on legal affairs would have appealed to Reuchlin. Many of his proverbs were translated into Latin and published in the sixteenth century. It is not known which edition Reuchlin used, as the lines quoted here do not appear in the extant editions of that era. It is also probable that he used a so called 'false' Freidank, i.e. a collection of compositions attributed to Freidank, but in reality written by unknown authors, who adopted Freidank's style of rhyming couplets. The popularity of these is indicated by the existence of manuscripts with over 4,000 verses. A more recent edition, divided into themes, has been published. See Danielle Buschinger, and Wolfgang Spiewok (eds.): *Freidanks Bescheidenheit* (Greifswald, 1996). See also the entry for 'Freidank' in *Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Ruh (1980) vol. 2, cols. 897–903.

253 This couplet is not in any of the known printed versions of the work.

254 My translation.

I say this not to vindicate those passages in the Talmud that should be rejected, but solely to prove that it should not be suppressed and burned for some unwise and foolish opinions it contains, in disputatious form, especially if understood literally.

Furthermore, it is also true that the sages of old concealed their wisdom and superior sciences in foolish discourses, enigmatic words or in obscure examples. Frequently they altered not only the language, but also changed the letters as well. Thus the Egyptians had two types of scripts one using the usual letters a, b, c which could be read by every Egyptian,[255] and the other, used only for the contemplation of holiness, was based on signs they had derived from natural objects such as beans, snakes, swords, stakes, rods, eyes, shields, etc. We still have books today, written in Greek,[256] for the explanation of this script. | Dij^{v} = X^{v}

St Cyril used this singular point of argument,[257] when he courageously remonstrated against the Emperor Julian's derisory speech on the passage concerning the Jews loading their sins onto a goat every year and then chasing it, together with their sins and evil deeds, into the wilderness, Levit. xvi.[258] He responded to it by stating that this style of writing was not only found in Holy Scripture, but that it was also the custom of the sages of

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[255] Reuchlin refers to the simple form of cursive hieroglyphics that developed from the hieratic script to become what is known as Demotic. See here W.V. Davies: *Egyptian hieroglyphs*: *Reading the past series*, (Avon, 1993), pp. 10–29.

[256] There seems to be some confusion to Reuchlin's source here. M. Dall'Asta infers Reuchlin's knowledge was gained probably from Bernardino Trebazio's Latin translation of Horapollon's fourth-century *Hieroglyphica*. This work was printed in Venice in 1515 by the well-known printer Aldus Manutius. It was designed as an aid for artists and became very popular with several versions being printed in the sixteenth century. Reuchlin was in correspondence with Trebazio, but his translation of Horapollon appeared later than the *Augenspiegel*. I believe Reuchlin's source was Manutius's printed edition of a collection of Greek texts entitled *Vita et fabellae Aesopi* printed in Venice in 1505. This work included some texts by Horapollon on hieroglyphics, but not the entire version was published until completed by Trebazio in 1515. See here A. Leinz-v. Dessauer also suggests it was Manutius's 1505 publication, but its title is given as, 'Hieroglyphica', i.e. the title of the completed translation of 1515. Reuchlin gives no reference for his source. See *Gutachten*, Leinz–v. Dessauer, ed. (1965), p. 114, and note 25. See also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, Reuchlins Vorrede zur Naukler-Chronik, pp. 502–503, and note 40 and in the same volume, *Letter 261*, Reuchlin to Bernardino Trebazio, pp. 174–178, here p. 176, and note 3.

[257] The reference here is to St Cyril of Alexandria's work *Adversus Julianum*, written between 430 and 440. This is a collection of at least 20 books in which Cyril refutes the assertions of Emperor Julian in *Contra Galileos*, written some 80 years previously. See Cyril: *Adversus Julianum*, *Lib*. IX: PG 76 964 A ff. as cited in Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 44.

[258] Lev. 16, 20–22.

antiquity to present their great wisdom in enigmatic form, using parables and allegories to camouflage their writings. Hence the passage on the creation of the world in six days,[259] although all things are created instantly; or the twin edged sword that hangs before paradise,[260] or that God said he regretted creating man,[261] or that Abraham saw three men and prayed to one of them, and that the three ate with him even though God does not eat,[262] or that God is said to have come down to Sodom[263] or to Mount Sinai[264] although He is all-present and unmoveable; or that God will arise; or that God lives in this or that place,[265] or that God is filled with anger,[266] hate, fury and 'back and front' with revenge,[267] or that His external form has a face,[268] hands and feet,[269] or that the old sages termed 'wisdom', 'water' and 'ignorance', 'hunger and thirst'; or that bodily lust is called 'whore', and therefore Solomon began all his parables and proverbs with a whore,[270] and ended them with a pious woman.[271] And that in the Holy Gospels heaven is compared with many things.[272] That Pythagoras,[273] the foremost philosopher, called justice 'a scales', anger 'a fire', war a 'sword', the making of mistakes 'the public road' and gossipers 'swallows', as Porphyry[274] says of him in the first volume of 'History of the Philosophers', and which Saint Jerome[275] men-

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259 Gen. 1–30.
260 Gen. 3, 24.
261 Gen. 6, 7.
262 Gen. 18, 1–8.
263 Gen. 18, 21.
264 Exod. 19, 18.
265 Exod. 29, 45.
266 Num. 11, 1; Exod. 32, 10; Ps. 77,7.
267 Deut. 32, 35.
268 Ps. 17, 15.
269 Ps. 2, 11; Ps. 18, 9.
270 Prov. 5, 1 ff.
271 Prov. 31, 10 ff.
272 Matt. 13, 24 ff.
273 See Heinz Scheible, 'Reuchlins Einfluss auf Melanchthon', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 123–149.
274 Porphyry (ca. 234–305?) was a neo-Platonist philosopher whose works were part of the curriculum for scholars in the fifteenth century. Reuchlin probably refers here to Porphyry's *Philosophos istoria*. See Porphyry: *Vita Pythagorae* 42. Also *Neoplatonic Saints*: *The Lives of Plotinus and Proclus by their Students, Transl. with an Introduction* by Mark Edwards (Liverpool, 2000). He possessed some of Porphyry's manuscripts though details of them are limited. See K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 60, and note 206.
275 This is a reference to Jerome's *Apology against Rufinus*, Book II. See Jerome: *contra Rufinum* II: PL 23 507–508 as cited in Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 45. Jerome defends himself against the accusation of using excessive language.

tions in his retort to Rufinus[276] the priest. And if I may summarize briefly the aforementioned Pythagoras's view on all of this: he quite simply forbade his students to make known to simple people anything that he taught them of extraordinary sciences in school, as Lysias[277] clearly states in his writings to Hipparchus.[278] The philosophers who came after him deliberately acted likewise; either it was forbidden to write about the sciences, or it could only be written about them in such an obscure manner that not everyone could understand them. Just as Plato also did, as is evident from his books, particularly in the missives[279] | or letters he wrote to high-ranking officials. Diij^{r} = XI^{r}
The druids also did likewise in France during the reign of Emperor Julius, as he himself writes in the 'commentaries' (*Commentarii*).[280] We find it in other sciences, too, especially in alchemy where all the metals have been given the seven names of the planets,[281] as Geber,[282] whom they call master

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Jerome points out that writers use various styles of language depending on whether one wants to display style or to debate a point. He cited various classical authors including Porphyry as examples of people who had also used such methods to support their arguments. Reuchlin wishes to point to his own style of writing as following a similar method.

276 Rufinus Tyrannius of Aquileia (AD 345–410) was one of the Latin authors and translators of Greek works in the early Church. After translating Origen's *De principiis* he became involved in a bitter dispute with St Jerome for his favourable rendering of this work. Jerome's efforts to have Origen condemned for supposedly promoting Arianism were rejected by Rufinus. This led to a series of misunderstandings between them and to a public dispute in the early Church. See the entry for 'Rufinus Tyrannius v. Aquileja' in: *LThK*, vol. 9, cols. 91–92.

277 See Lysias (445–388 BC) was a Pythagorean philosopher and preceptor to Epaminondas. Apparently some of the works attributed to Pythagoras are believed to have been written by Lysias. See Diogenes Laertios: *Vitae VIII* 42. For a moder German translation see *Leben und Lehre der Philosophen. Aus dem Griechischen übersetzt und hrsg.* von Fritz Jürß (Stuttgart, 1998), here book 8, chapter 42.

278 Hipparchus (ca. AD 190–125) was a neo-Platonist philosopher, Greek astronomer and mathematician. He wrote many treatises on his observations of the planets and laid the foundations for the mathematical science of trigonometry. See 'Hipparchus' in: *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary*, p. 311.

279 See Plato, Ep. 2 314a. He possessed both Latin and Greek editions of Plato's works as well as a printed edition translated by Marsilio Ficino. See K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 81.

280 The reference is to Julius Caesar's *Gallic War*, book 6, chapter 14. See Julius Caesar: *Comentarii de bello Gallico VI* 14. For an English translation see C. Julius Caesar, Caesar ' *Caeser*'s *Gallic War*. Transl. by W.A. McDevitte. Transl. W.S. Bohn. 1st Edition. (New York, 1869). Harper's New Classical Library.

281 The Alexandrian school of alchemy posited a theory of correspondence of earthly properties with patterns in the cosmos. Thus the seven metals of gold, silver, iron, mercury, copper, lead and tin matched the seven planets known at that time. See Trevor H. Levere: *Transforming Matter: A History of Chemistry from Alchemy to the Buckyball* (Baltimore, 2001), p. 5.

282 There has been considerable debate as to who Geber was, or whether in fact he ever truly existed. The most recent research points to Paulus de Tarento, although here again

of all masters, wrote in his book *Summa perfectionis magisterii*; and as Arnoldus de Villa Nova[283] wrote in his *Rosarium*; Lullus[284] in his *Codicillus*,[285] and in the *Liber vademecum*,[286] and in the *Liber de intentione alkimistarum* and in the *Liber experimentorum*, and master Johannes Stirus[287] of England in the *Rosarium*; and in the *Arte* by Arcturus,[288] and in many other texts.

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there are no clear documentary records of such a person having lived or resided in Tarento. Nevertheless he is considered to have been the author of a considerable number of works on alchemy. The most widely known is *Summa perfectionis* which Reuchlin refers to here. This text was apparently printed in Venice in 1475. A comprehensive study on this work has been done by William R. Newman. See *The "Summa Perfectionis" of Pseudo-Geber*: *A Critical Edition, Transl. and Study* by William R. Newman (Leiden, 1991). See also C. Gilly (ed.): *Magic, Alchemy and Science Fifteenth—Eighteenth Centuries*, p. 451 and p. 465, and note 2. *Bibliotheca Palatina*, ed. Mittler (1986) pp. 345–347. T.H. Levere: *Transforming Matter*, pp. 7–8. See also the entry for 'Geber' in: *Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Ruh (1980) vol. 2, cols 1105–1109.

283 There are few biographical details extant on Arnold of Villanova (ca. 1240) but he is thought to be of Jewish origin and a native of Valencia. Many alchemical works were attributed to him in the Middle Ages including the *Rosarium* or *Rosarius*. Several passages in them are identical to Geber's *Summa perfectionis*, and it is more likely that they were written by unknown authors who plagiarized parts of *Summa perfectionis*. It is not known which manuscript Reuchlin used or where he obtained it. See W.R. Newman: *The "Summa Perfectionis" of Pseudo-Geber*, p. 197. Michaela Pereira, 'The Alchemical Corpus Attributed to Lull', in: *Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts*, 18 (1989), pp. 6–21.

284 Raymond Lull (1232–1316). The four books Reuchlin refers to here belong to the group now called the *Apocryphal Alchemical Works* or *Alchemical Corpus*.

The manuscripts Reuchlin used are unknown, but he may have read them while he stayed in Florence, as a number of Lull's and Villanova's alchemical works, including those here mentioned and dating from the sixteenth century. They are stored in Florence's Biblioteca Nationale today which suggests they were used by scholars in that city. M. Pereira: 'The Alchemical Corpus Attributed to Lull', pp. 6–21. Eusebio Colomer, 'Lulls Verhalten zu den Andersgläubigen: Zwischen Dialog und Monolog', in Charles Lohr (ed.): *Anstöße zu einem Dialog der Religionen*: *Thomas von Aquin-Ramon Llull-Nikolaus von Kues* (Freiburg, 1997), pp. 50–70. See the entry for 'Lull' in: *TRE*, vol. 21, pp. 500–506.

285 *Liber Super Alchymiae seu Philosophiae Codicillus sive Testamentum, quod et eiusdem Theorica Dicunt*.

286 See the entry for 'Pseudo-Lullus' in: *Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Ruh (1988) vol. 5, cols. 1046–1049 for the books *Liber Vademecum*; *Compendium et Liber Lumen Luminum de Intentione Alchimistarum*; *Liber Experimentorum de Praxi Sermocinali et Sublimandi Corpora in Primam Materiam*.

287 I have not been able to establish with certainty the reference here. The British Library in London contains an entry in the catalogue of manuscripts entitled '*Johannis Hastiri* (*Dastyn*) *Anglici vermisium in ante maiori et est Rosarium*; *Tractatus varii alchymic I*'. British Library entry cat. no. 10.764. It is possible that he refers to this work. The Florentine National Library also has a catalogue entry for 'Johannes Anglicus' and his work entitled *Rosarium de lapide philosophorum*, but no further details could be found.

288 Here again the identity of the author Arcturus or the work referred to is unknown. It may refer to the text *Artis auriferae* which was widely distributed as a manuscript in Reuchlin's day and first printed in 1593. See C. Gilly (ed.): *Magic, Alchemy and Science Fifteenth-Eighteenth Centuries*, p. 456.

In all of these there are many wondrous, arcane words and expressions, which someone might think an insane person spoke to them in a dream. But scholars of this subject know full well what is meant and that the expressions are laudable and praiseworthy.

Likewise in medicine, where 'album Graecum' (white Greek) is the name for dogs' droppings[289] and dried human flesh is called 'mumea' etc. Similarly in classical poetry; all of Homer[290] is filled with references to arcane arts that are expressed in riddles; and also in Hesiod,[291] Orpheus,[292] and Theocritus.[293]

Now, therefore, if our forefathers were sometimes allowed the freedom to interpret all their branches of sciences in a manner contrary to the meaning and understanding of the literal text, so that the uninitiated and those ignorant of the science might not ridicule it, why then should it be forbidden for the disciples of the Talmud to give an understanding of its mystical teachings in arcane words? And thus prevent those 'with unwashed feet'[294] from walking all over it, saying they also understand its meaning.

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289 The use of animal and human excrement for medicinal purposes was a common feature in pharmaceutical remedies. As late as the twentieth century it was not unknown in pharmacies to receive requests for 'weißer Enzian' (white gentian) which was the cover name for dog's faeces. See the entry for 'Kot' in: *HDA*, vol. 5 (1987), col. 342.

290 The reference is to the celebrated Greek poet Homer and to his renowned work, the *Iliad*. I have been unable to identify the exact passage in *The Iliad* to which Reuchlin may be referring, but perhaps it is in the allegorical scenes of the 'Repents' in book nine and the parable of Meleagros, 9:491–612. On his second visit to Italy in 1490, he learned of Homer's work through his Greek mentor, Demetrios Chalkondyles. His effort to purchase it is evident from letters to friends urging them to send him a copy. In 1495 he finally obtained a version of it and began to translate passages into German. See K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 61, especially notes 207–210. The text consulted is Homer: *The Iliad. Transl.* by Robert Fitzgerald *with an Introduction* by G.S. Kirk (repr. Oxford, 1988).

291 Hesiod's famous poem is entitled 'The Works and the Days'. Reuchlin possessed a copy of the author's works and refers here probably to line 44 in the text, 'For the gods keep hidden from men the means of life'. See *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica* with an English Translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Homeric Hymns. Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press; (London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1914). Also Peter Levi: *The Pelican History of Greek Literature* (Bungay, 1985), pp. 47–64. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 81.

292 Orpheus was a mystical Greek writer whose identity is unknown. Several Greek classical works are attributed to him, among them *Jason and the Argonauts*. Reuchlin had a collection of works attributed to Orpheus in his library. See K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 81.

293 Theocritus was a Greek poet who flourished in the third century BC. He wrote a number of passionate and erotic poems. Reuchlin possessed a copy of his works, but he gives only the author's name and not the titles. The reference is likely to be Theocritus' *Idylls*. See Judith Haber: *Pastoral and Poetics of Self-Contradiction*: *Theocritus to Marvell* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 12–35. Also K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 81.

294 This was an expression commonly used in the sixteenth century to mean something

If some simpleton were to come and say: 'Almighty and most powerful Emperor, sovereign lord. Your majesty should suppress and burn all the books on alchemy because they contain blasphemy, scandal and many foolish and silly things contrary to our Christian faith. The alchemist is taught in them that the man should lie under the woman so long until the power of the heat enables him to mount her'.[295] Now such practice is strictly forbidden by Imperial Law and punishable by death; *l Cum. Vir nubit in feminam. C. de adul.et stup*. Yet students learn this with the verse:

Trude illum sub eam nec fac sui cernere quicquam. Sic crissando letus erit sub feminae scandens. Cum iacet et pugnat neque tardat sub muliere. Viribus
Diij^{v} = XI^{v} *ascendet | ipsam sub se cito prendet etc.*,[296]

written in Arcturus's 'Science',[297] with its many unseemly commands and prohibitions. Your Majesty would be performing a good deed to have such books burned. Furthermore, what could be more foolish and silly to read than when somebody asserts and teaches his students that one can, and that he has power, to create the sun from the moon,[298] and to create out of one moon many suns; and [to create] out of a fugitive serf a solid mercury, etc., How would Your Imperial Majesty answer such an ox or donkey, other than to say: 'You are a simpleton, more to be laughed at than to be answered. Evidently you know nothing about this science. Be off with you, I certainly will not burn any of them!'

Now if such a foolish person fails to understand and appreciate the secrets of such a science, and is unworthy of its study, and hence expounds it contrary to its real meaning, would you then counsel that such books

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unclean, impure, a person of insufficient maturity or lacking in knowledge. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 24, cols. 909–910.

295 Alchemists used such language to describe the reactions of chemicals with each other. The process of chemicals uniting to form a new substance was described as a chemical marriage. A text containing such language is the fifteenth-century *Chymisch Hochzeit* (Strasbourg, 1459) by Christian Rosencreutz. See Johann Valentin Andreä: *Die chymische Hochzeit des Christian Rosencreutz (1459)*: Gedeutet und kommentiert von Bastiaan Baan (Stuttgart, 2001). See also T.H. Levere: *Transforming Matter*, p. 8.

296 Reuchlin quotes a popular Latin school verse, whose origin is unknown, and was obviously recited by schoolboys for its erotic allegory. (From there it pushes upwards from under her and does not withdraw from anyone. In this manner the haunches are moved with joy beneath the mounted woman. Whenever you lie prostrate contending what to do, do not be slow under the woman. It rises up with strength by itself and quickly grasps under her etc). My translation.

297 The reference here is uncertain.

298 Reuchlin again refers to the terminology used for chemical processes in alchemical manuscripts and printed books.

should be burned, because such a dim-sighted person is unable to understand them? I am sure you would say no.

For this very same reason the works of the poets of antiquity still exist, though they contain far more shameful things than those found in the Talmud, and are much more opposed to our Christian faith than the Talmud. Furthermore, all of philosophy is derived from Homer, the most celebrated poet, who spared neither God nor the world with his untrue stories. Alexander the Great[299] read his books diligently by day, and at night when he went to bed they were placed under his pillow, for they were considered to be the chief source of all human and divine knowledge. St John Chrysostom[300] likewise had the works of the poet Aristophanes[301] daily in his hands as a sort of stylus. He 'formed and pointed' all his discourses according to him in the numerous books which he wrote, although Aristophanes was a pagan author of fables.[302] Therefore Canon Law rightly says in *dis. xxxvij. canone legimus*: 'We read many things so that they do not remain unknown; we also read many things to gain information from them and we read many things, not to keep them in mind, but to repudiate them'.[303]

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[299] See Plutarch: *Alexandros* 8 as cited in Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*, ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 47. Alexander (356–323 BC) was king of Macedonia. He was the subject of many fantastic legends portraying his military and political achievements. Reuchlin possessed a copy of *Vitae* by Plutarch (ca. AD 46–120), and here he uses his description of Alexander, 'and he was by nature a lover of learning and a lover of reading. And since he thought and called the Iliad a viaticum of military art he took with him Aristotle's recension of the poem called the *Iliad of the Casket*, and always kept it lying with his dagger under his pillow'. For an English translation see *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* by Plutarch. Translated by John Dryden Edited by A.H. Clough (1859). On Reuchlin's copy see K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 81.

[300] John Chrysostom (347–407) wrote several pastoral sermons, and also on the ideal of monastic life. It is not known which of his works Reuchlin possessed or read or the source he used here. See the entry for 'Johannes Chrysostomos', in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 1018–1021.

[301] Aristophanes (c. 450–385 BC) was a Greek dramatist who satirized politicians and intellectuals in his plays. He made great use of fantasy, as in 'Lysistrata', where he gives an account of a women's sex strike for peace. His plays contain a great deal of sexual and scatological language, as exemplified in *Birds*. Passages from all these plays were considered to be obscene. See James Robson: *Humour, Obscenity and Aristophanes* (Tübingen, 2006), pp. 39–70. Reuchlin compares Chrysostom's right to read pagan authors with his own argument for freedom to study the Talmud. See Aristophanes: *Lysistrata. The Comedies Edited with Translation and Notes* by Alan H. Sommerstein (Warminster, 1990). Angus M. Bowie: *Aristophanes: Myth, Ritual and Comedy* (Cambridge, 1993).

[302] The source of this citation could not be identified.

[303] Reuchlin uses a quotation from St Ambrose, which Gratian included in the corpus of Canon Law. See F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 73 and note 38.

St Basil[304] wrote an extra tract on this point explaining that we can and should read all books because of their particular usefulness to us, and in the sense of the above cited law. Among all the learned and holy men, who
Diiij^{r} = XII^{r} defended our Christian faith, there is no one who ever wished or | demanded that the above cited books be burned or suppressed. If we are to fulfil the commandment of Our Dear Lord Jesus Christ, as He says in Matt. xiij,[305] then we should not pull out the weeds so that we do not destroy the entire good corn as well, but we should leave it standing until the harvest. When that harvest will take place he explains later, namely so: the harvest is the end of time or the end of the creation of the world.[306] Then the master of the house, that is God the Father Himself, will say to the reapers, 'pull up first the weeds and bind them into bundles so that I can burn them'.[307] Note, that even then, God does not burn the whole cornfield because of the weeds, but only wants to separate them from the corn, to bind them and to burn these 'faggots'[308]or bundles. The Holy Catholic Church loyally follows this principle of Canon Law, *ca. Sancta romana ecclesia xv. distinc.*, in that she permits all books to remain extant so that they can be examined and sorted, as in the words of Paul the Apostle, 1 Thess. 5[309] where he says: 'Test everything; hold fast what is good.'

But if we were to burn the books, then our descendants will not be able to examine them. Thus the Holy Christian Church commands that the books of Rufinus[310] and Origen[311] be retained, except for those lines and passages

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304 See Basil: *Sermo de legendis libris gentilium* PG 31 563–590. This is a reference to St Basil's (c. 330–379) *Homily* (*XXII*) on the education of the young. Basil points out that all literature, including that by pagan authors, is useful and should be read in the preparation for life. For an English translation see Basil's 'Homily On the Education of the Young' in: Basil: *Letters and Select Works*: A Select Library of the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church Second Series*. Translated into English with Prolegomena and explantory notes. Edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Church History in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. And Henry Wace, D.D., Principal of King's College, London. Volume VIII Basil: *Letters and Select Works* (T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1895).

305 Matt. 13, 24–30. In citing this passage Reuchlin uses a strong theological argument to support his stand on the preservation of Jewish religious books, including those considered to be heretical.

306 Matt. 13, 39.

307 Matt. 13, 30.

308 Reuchlin uses the French term 'fagot' indicating his knowledge of that language.

309 1 Thess. 5, 21.

310 Rufinus Tyrannius of Aquileja (345–401).

311 Origen's speculative writings on philosophy led to controversy and to a rejection of some of his writings as being unorthodox. At the Council of Alexandria (AD 400) a number of theories attributed to Origen were condemned. This condemnation was reinforced

condemned by Saint Jerome, etc. It can be concluded from this that Our Mother, the Holy Christian Church, does not permit the burning of any book simply because it is interlaced with good and evil, and that's the truth of the matter. On the other hand, if someone were to find a book that was entirely evil and nothing useful was to be obtained from it, and if it was or is within our jurisdiction and authority, then we may lawfully confiscate and legally burn it. Just as the Church authorities and courts commanded to be done with the books of the heretics who fell away from our common faith. Likewise those manuscripts and books written on matters of faith that are contrary to the articles and orders of the Holy Councils and to the superior head of Christianity, are to be confiscated and examined by decree, and if found unlawful they are to be burned. Just as was done in the case of the censured and condemned heretic named Eutyches, and with Nestorius and with their followers, who were deposed and condemned at the Councils[312] of | Chalcedon and Ephesus, 5th [canon].[313] The Roman emperor, as the executive and executor of the Councils and canons of the Christian Church, commanded that all such heretical manuscripts and books that repudiate the Councils of Chalcedon and Ephesus should be burned; *l. quicunque*. §. *Nulli etiam et. l. damnato*. C. *de. heret. et manich*. Diiij^{v} = XII^{v}

That case was based on a different point at issue.[314] It had another status and is not comparable to the present one. Heretics, through having

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at the Council of Constantinople in 553. See the entry for 'Origenes' in: *LMA*, vol. 6 (1993), col. 1185.

[312] He refers to the controversy that followed the third ecumenical council, held at Ephesus (AD 431) where Nestorianism was condemned as an unorthodox belief. The decision led to factions within the council concerning the orthodoxy of the two natures in Christ. A monk named Eutyches (ca. 378–454) challenged this teaching. At the Second Council of Ephesus (AD 449) he was censured in a doctrinal statement sent to the Council by Pope Leo I (440–461). Despite the Pope's condemnation he was rehabilitated by the Council, because of the political struggle for primacy between the eastern Greek Church centred in Constantinople, and the western Latin Church based in Rome. The Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) annulled the previous decisions made at Ephesus and Eutyches was declared a heretic. Among the books found in Reuchlin's library was a manuscript giving details of the Council of Ephesus. See K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 51. David Christie-Murray: *A History of Heresy*, pp. 62–83. Henry Chadwick: *The Early Church*: *The Pelican History of the Church* (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 43 ff. See the entry for 'Eutyches, Irrlehrer' in: *LThK*, vol. 3, cols. 1213–1214 for a description of Eutyches's philosophy.

[313] Reuchlin cites the number (in Latin) of the Council's pronouncement as supporting evidence.

[314] He expresses his point using the phraseology, 'ainen andern handel'. This was most uncommon at the time and was incorporated into Grimm's *Wörterbuch* as an example of an unusual use of the term 'handel'. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 10, col. 370.

received the sacrament of baptism and other sacraments, are subject to the Christian Church in all matters pertaining to religion and have no judges other than the Pope and the clerics of our religion; *c. ut. inquisitionis.* § *prohibemus de heret. li. vi.* The Jews, however, in matters concerning their religion, are subject to no judge other than themselves. No Christian should pronounce sentence on them except, in incidents of a secular nature when legal proceedings should be brought against them in the appropriate manner; *l. iudei et in Bart .C. de iudeis.* The reason for this is that they are not limbs of the Christian Church and thus their beliefs are of no consequence to us; *glo. penul. in cle .i. de usur.* St Paul, the holy Apostle, writes about this for us in 1Cor. v,[315] where he says: 'For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not sufficient that you may judge those inside the Church? God judges those outside' cited verbatim (*haec ille*).

That is enough said about the Talmud and why it should not be suppressed or burned.

Now to the third section of the Jewish books concerning the divine secrets, utterances and words of God, called the Cabbala. I could say a lot both for and against it, for our Holy Father Pope Innocent VIII[316] had the contents of the Cabbalistic books carefully examined and appraised, twenty years ago, by many eminent and erudite bishops and doctors [of theology], in the ecclesiastical case against that nobly born erudite Count, Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola,[317] of blessed memory. At that time he announced publicly that he was willing to go to Rome to dispute on themes and conclusions, among them namely the thesis: 'There is no other science that provides us with greater certainty of Christ's divinity than magic and the Cabbala'.[318] The masters of the Holy Scriptures, however, wrote and said many things contrary to this affirmation, although they were totally ignorant as to what the kind of animal the Cabbala was. Nevertheless, the aforementioned count rebutted their assertions at that time with well-reasoned | Dv^{r} = XIII^{r}

315 1Cor. 5, 12–13.

316 See Commentary, pp. 43–44.

317 Ibid., pp. 43–44.

318 Ionnes Picus Mirandulus, *Conclusiones Magicae numero XXVI secundam opinionem propriam 9 in Opera omnia Basel 1572* (reprint Torino 1971) vol. 1 p. 105 as cited in J. Reuchlin *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 49. See also L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. 4, pp. 484–511. C. Zika: 'Reuchlin's *De verbo mirifico* and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century', p. 124.

discourses.[319] A sequel to this debate was a book opposing him written by doctor Peter Garisia Bishop of Usselen[320] and dedicated to Pope Innocent. After Innocent's death, his successor, Pope Alexander VI,[321] finally commissioned several learned cardinals, bishops and the Master of the Palace[322] to thoroughly assess the pros and cons of the books and speeches of both parties. Following their in depth deliberations, His Holiness found that the aforementioned Count Johann [Pico] had deservedly studied and written well on the Cabbala, and therefore his book entitled *Apologia* was approved by a papal breve in the year 1493. In it he [Pico] reviewed thoroughly the books of the Cabbala, and said that those same books, of which there must be about 70,[323] show not only the spirituality of the saintly man

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[319] He refers to Mirandola's fifth question in his *Apologia* where Pico attempts to differentiate between the natural magic and the revealed Cabbala. The latter he considered to be the true Christian Cabbala which confirmed the divinity of Christ. See Ionnes Picus Mirandulus *Apologia* in *Opera omnia Basel 1572* (reprint Torino 1971) vol. 1 p. 177 as cited in J. Reuchlin *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 49. See here also C. Wirszubski: *Pico DellaMirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, pp. 122–125; 133. Cis van Heertum (ed.): *Philosophia symbolica*: *Johann Reuchlin and the Kabbalah*, p. 25.

[320] See Commentary, p. 44. He was the Vatican librarian at the time of Mirandola's debate with Rome. Reuchlin refers here to Garcia's, *Determinationes magistrales contra conclusiones apologeticas Joannis Pici Mirulandulani Concordiae comitis* (1487), as cited in J. Reuchlin *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 49. See also William G. Craven: *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, *Symbol of his Age*: *Modern Interpretations of a Renaissance Philosopher* (Geneva, 1981) p. 17, and p. 52. L. Thorndike: *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, vol. 4, p. 447.

[321] Pope Alexander VI (1492–1503) was of the Borgia family, the most powerful and wealthy dynasty in fifteenth-century Italy. He admitted a large number of Jews, expelled from Spain, and confirmed the privileges granted to those resident in the city of Rome. In 1493 Pope Alexander issued a papal bull rehabilitating Mirandola and emphasised that Mirandola had always accepted the authority and the jurisdiction of the Church. See Volker Reinhardt: *Der unheimliche Papst*: *Alexander VI. Borgia 1431–1503* (Munich, 2005). L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 152–153. H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus- Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld* (*13.-20. Jh.*), pp. 575–576. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter VI*, Reuchlin to the Cologne theological faculty, pp. 634–639, here p. 639, and note 21.

[322] The Masters of the Sacred Palace were officials of the Holy Office. This authority was part of the papal administration and functioned as the final court of appeal in trials of heresy. It was charged with ensuring the orthodoxy of all theological writings, and hence all publications concerning matters of faith or scripture were subject to its scrutiny. Traditionally the position of head or master of the court was held by a member of the Dominican Order who advised the pope on all decisive theological matters. On the history and functions of the Holy Office over the centuries, see the entry for 'Kardinalskongregationen' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 1344–1349. See also Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, p. 287 and n. 3.

[323] The number seventy is of great significance to Reuchlin as he believes there are 70 Cabbalistic books extant. He bases his conclusion on the 4th Book of Esdras 14, 42–47, where

Moses, but are also the foundation and truth of our Christian faith. He says Pope Sixtus IV commanded that those same Cabbalistic books be translated into Latin, and be interpreted for their particular benefit to our Christian faith. Up to now, only three of those books have been translated into Latin.[324]

Consequently, and because I have also read some of the Cabbalistic books, I could dispute at length for and against them with regard to this counsel. But as it is quite evident from the Count Mirandola's above mentioned *Apologia*, a book that has been approved by Pope Alexander, that the books of the Cabbala are not only harmless, but are also extremely useful to our Christian faith. Pope Sixtus IV has ordered them to be translated into Latin for the use of us Christians. There are therefore sufficient grounds for me to conclude that such Cabbalistic books should not, nor can they be legally suppressed or burned. To support this part of my counsel on this point, I therefore adduce here as evidence the third[325] book of

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it says, 'but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise men among the people. For in them is found the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge'.

[324] Mirandola in his work, *De Dignitate Hominis* (1486) ('On the Dignity of Man') cites the same passage from Esdras. It is not known whether Reuchlin possessed any of Mirandola's works, as none are recorded in the library list compiled by Karl Christ in 1924, but it can be assumed that Reuchlin possessed some or had at least access to them when he began his *De verbo mirifico* in 1494. There is evidence in the same book to indicate that he possessed Mirandola's *Conclusiones*. D. Englander, D. Norman, et al.: *Culture and Belief in Europe, 1450–1600*, pp. 22–28. Charles Zika: *Reuchlin und die okkulte Tradition der Renaissance* (Sigmaringen, 1998), p. 50. W.G. Craven: *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Symbol of his Age*, p. 126.

The three cabbalistic books were *Commentary on the Five Books of Moses* by Menachem Recanati; *De scientia animae* by Rabbi Elieser of Worms, and thirdly a collection of Cabbalistic proverbs by Moses de Leon, a thirteenth-century Jewish exegete who wrote Cabbalistic explanations of the Book of Ezekiel and of the Pentateuch. See here J. Reuchlin: *Gutachten*; ed. Leinz-v. Dessauer, (1965), p. 115, and note 31. On Reuchlins's collection of Cabbalistic books see W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 35–41. See also the entry for Menahem ben Bejamin Recanati in: *Jewish Encyclopedia* eds. C. Adler, G. Deutsch K. Kohler 12 vols. (New York 1901–1906).

[325] The Book of Esdras is part of the Apocrypha, i.e. those books of the Bible considered not to be part of the Canon of writings. Its numbering has changed over time. In the latest version of Reuchlin's complete works it is indicated that he errs in his numbering here, and that the Bible reference should be the fourth book of Esdras. See J. Reuchlin: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 50 and note IV. I maintain, however, that his numbering was quite correct, for it was only after the Council of Trent (1545–1563) that it was given this number in the new Roman Catholic *Vulgate* version of the Bible. See here the introduction to the Apocrypha in *RSV*, pp. XI–XXII, and the Second Book of Esdras, p. 23.

Esdras,[326] where we read in the nineth chapter of our Bible, about the 70 books that came from God's mouth, and which are not to be understood by everyone.

Furthermore, with reference to the fourth division of the Jewish books, i.e. those where glosses and commentaries to the Bible are mentioned, my counsel is that they should not nor cannot be legally suppressed or burned for the following reason: these books explain how each word of the Bible is to be understood according to the specific characteristic of the language, just as Abraham Ibn Ezra,[327] Moses Ibn Gabirol,[328] and Rabbi | David Kimchi[329] do, all of whom expound each word according to its grammatical context. We should not burn these books, no more than we would Dv^{v} = XIII^{v}

[326] 2 Esdras 14, 46.

[327] Abraham (ben Meir) ibn Ezra (1092–1167) was a twelfth-century Spanish Jew who became widely known for his commentary on the Bible, for his scholarship as a Hebrew grammarian and philosopher. He differed from other Jewish commentators of this era in that he concentrated on the literal meaning of the text. He was greatly influenced by Solomon ibn Gabirol (see following note). In his exegesis of the Old Testament he used number imagery and made reference to Hebrew being the language that God spoke. Cabbalists were later to adopt this view as part of their beliefs. See Heinz Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte (11.-13. Jh.), mit einer Ikonographie des Judenthemas bis zum 4. Laterankonzil* (2nd ed. Frankfurt am Main, 1991), pp. 206–208. See the entry for 'Abraham ben Meir ibn Esra' in: *TRE*, vol. 1, pp. 389–392.

[328] Here Reuchlin's reference is incorrect and undoubtedly refers to Solomon ibn Gabirol (1021–1058/9). The orthography of the name varies depending on the source used. Gabirol was a native of Toledo and known in the Latin West as Avicebron, a philosopher and poet. He maintained that we can know God only through revelation, and that this is the only certain foundation of religion. This philosophy was very much in accordance with Reuchlin's own personal beliefs and would have confirmed and encouraged him in his exegetical study of the Bible, in particular his use of Hebrew. It is unknown as to how well Reuchlin was familiar with Gabirol's works, as he refers to him as 'Moyses ben Gebirol' which may indicate he had only indirect knowledge of his writings. For details of Solomon ibn Gabirol see the entry in: *J. Encyclopedia* eds. C. Adler et al. See also W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 57–58.

[329] David Kimchi (Kimhi) (1160–1235) stemmed from a family of Jewish literati and was also a noted Cabbalist writer. He also wrote a major grammar book on the Hebrew language that became the standard authority until the nineteenth century. Reuchlin obtained a copy of this grammar on 12th June 1498, together with Kimchi's commentary on four books of the Old Testament namely Joshua, Judges, Kings and the Book of Samuel. In the *Augenspiegel* the name Kimchi is written 'Kimhi'. I have used the more recent orthography 'Kimchi', as it is generally used in modern English texts. On D. Kimchi's books in Reuchlin's library see, W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 104–108; 230–231. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 65 & p. 75. See the entry for 'Kimchi' in: *EJ* (2007) ed. F. Skolnik, vol. 12, pp. 155–156. W. Bunte: *Rabbinische Traditionen bei Nikolaus von Lyra*, p. 32. See also Steven J. McMichael: *Was Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah*, p. 99.

burn the books of Priscianus,[330] Cornucopia,[331] Servius,[332] and Donatus[333] on the Latin language. Likewise we cannot destroy the commentaries and expositions of Rabbi Salomon,[334] Rabbi Moses of Gerona,[335] Rabbi Levi ben

[330] Priscianus Africanus (AD 441–518) was a celebrated Latin grammarian and translator of Greek authors. His most famous work *Institutio de Arte Grammatica* was adapted for use in universities and became the standard textbook of the Late Middle Ages for the teaching of Latin. One of Reuchlin's teachers in Paris, Johannes Lapidanus, used it in his teaching and hence Reuchlin was fully aware of its importance for the study of the language. See Sarah Rees Jones (ed.): *Learning and Literacy in Medieval England and Abroad*, (Turnhout, 2003), pp. 12–13. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 36, and note 9. B. Price: *Medieval Thought*, pp. 221–222. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 108*, Reuchlin to Heinrich Hebel, pp. 344–347, here p. 347, and note 13.

[331] The *Cornucopiae* was a 700 page encyclopaedia of the Latin language compiled by Niccolo Perotti (1429–1480) and first printed in Venice in 1499 by Aldus Manutius, the first printer of Greek texts. At least eleven editions of this work had appeared by 1500. M. Davies: *Aldus Manutius*: *Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice*, p. 33. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 211*, Konrad Peutinger to Reuchlin, p. 357, and note 16.

[332] Servius (Maurus) or Marius Servius Honoratus was a fourth-century Roman grammarian whose commentaries on Virgil's *Aeneid* were widely read. They were part of the curriculum in schools and universities of the Middle Ages. The first edition was printed at Rome in 1471. Reuchlin used this grammar for the correct translation of one of his poems. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 194*, Reuchlin to the collectors of strange books, pp. 263–273, here p. 272, and note 31. For details of Servius's writings see *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary*, p. 624.

[333] Donatus Aelius, a Latin grammarian also of the fourth century and one of St Jerome's teachers. His works 'The lesser Art' (*Ars minor*) and 'Barbarism' (*Barbarismus*) were part of the curriculum at cathedral schools and universities until the eighteenth century. The elementary Latin grammar was originally written around the year AD 356 and was the most printed book prior to 1500. M. Davies: *Aldus Manutius*: *Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice*, p. 15.

For biographical details of Donatus Aelius see *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary*, p. 239. B. Price: *Medieval Thought*, pp. 221–222. See F. Machilek, 'Schulen und gelehrte Bildung', in G. Bott: *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 89–116, here p. 92.

[334] Rabbi Salomon ben Isaac of Troyes was an influential rabbinical exegete of the eleventh century. His works were consulted by both Jewish and Christian scholars alike, particularly Nicholas of Lyre, who quoted extensively from him in his *Postilla*. See the entry for 'Rashi' in: *EJ* (2007) F. Skolnik ed., vol. 17, pp. 101–106. J. Cohen: *The Friars and the Jews*, p. 175. W. Bunte: *Rabbinische Traditionen bei Nikolaus von Lyra*, p. 30. Reuchlin possessed a manuscript of his commentary on the psalms with a number of prayers. An important rand note made by Reuchlin on the manuscript mentions the names of his parents George and Elisa who are otherwise almost unknown. See W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 109–114 and note 20.

[335] Rabbi Rav Moshe ben Nahman (1194–1270) of Gerona in Spain was a Jewish exegete, philosopher, medical doctor, and one of the Cabbalist authors whose works Reuchlin possessed. His Cabbalist work was a commentary to the Pentateuch. Reuchlin bought this philosophical text on the 31 July 1498 in Rome, again for three gold gulden. (Unfortunately, this work was destroyed during an aerial attack in 1942.). Moshe ben Nahman was also called 'Nachmanides'. Reuchlin calls him 'Gerundensis' and he is also known by the name

Gersom,[336] who is referred to in the texts as master Leo de Banolis, the two masters, father and son Rabbi Joseph,[337] and Rabbi David Kimchi,[338] their brother Moses Kimchi,[339] and others like them, all of whom expounded each word of the Old Testament according to the characteristics of the Hebrew language. In a similar manner Eustathius[340] wrote his commentary

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'Ramban'. He became the representative of the Spanish Jews who opposed the Dominican apostate Pablo Christiani (†1274) at a public debate held in 1263 at Barcelona. It was following this dispute that Raymon Marti wrote the tract *Pugio fidei adversus Mauros et Iudaeos* which Reuchlin mentions in the text of the *Augenspiegel*, folio (Cij^{r} VI^{r}). W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 227–229. On Reuchlin use of his works see, L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, p. 119, and note 2. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 75. W. Bunte: *Rabbinische Traditionen bei Nikolaus von Lyra*, p. 30. For biographical details, and a list of his writings see the entry for 'Nachmanides' in: *EJ* (2007) F. Skolnik ed., vol. 14, pp. 739–748.

336 Rabbi Levi ben Gerschom or Gersonides (1288–1344) had various names including the following: Leo de Balneolis, Magister Leo de Banolis, the Latin version of his name, and Leo de Bagnolis. Research indicates he was probably from the city of Bagnols in Provence. Reuchlin refers to him in both his two major works on Hebrew writings, particularly Gersonides's commentary on the Book of Daniel. Gerschom's extensive commentaries on the Pentateuch were printed quite early (Ferarra, 1477) and were used by both Jewish and Christian exegetes alike. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola refers to him in his work '*Against Astrology*' and cites him on numerous occasions and considers him to be an outstanding exegetical authority. Reuchlin would have been familiar with his works due to his interest in Hebrew exegetical works and esoteric treatises on the influence of stars, but it is not known if he possessed any of Gersonides's astronomical texts, though he certainly would have heard of and probably read some of them. W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 43–44. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 75. See the entry for 'Levi ben Gershom' in: *EJ* (2007) F. Skolnik ed., vol. 12, pp. 698–702.

337 Joseph ben Isaak Kimchi (1105–1170) composed a Hebrew Grammar, the first to be published in Christian countries, as well as some exegetical work on the Pentateuch, the Book of Prophets, Proverbs and the Book of Job. His works show influence of the teachings of Spanish Jews in Southern France. Reuchlin obtained a copy of Joseph's commentary on Jeremiah, as he noted on the 21 June 1498 while in Rome. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 56, and note 167. See the entry for 'Kimchi' in: *EJ* (2007) F. Skolnik ed., vol. 12, pp. 157–159. H. Schreckenberg: *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte* (*11.-13. Jh.*), pp. 210–214.

338 David Kimchi was the second son of Joseph ben Isaak Kimchi. Reuchlin obtained a copy of David Kimchi's *Commentary on the Early Prophets* while visiting Rome in 1498. See here W. von Abel and M. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 230–231. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 75.

339 Moses Kimchi (†1109) was the eldest son of Joseph ben Isaak Kimchi and brother of David Kimchi. He continued the Hebrew grammatical work of his father Joseph, a work which is still in use today. He also wrote commentaries on the Books of Job, Proverbs and the Book of Esdras—Nehemiah. It seems Reuchlin obtained a German translation of Moses Kimchi's Hebrew grammar. See here W. von Abel and M. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 232–234. K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 47, and note 140.

340 Eustathios (†1194) of Thessalonica was a Byzantine scholar, philosopher, historian and grammarian. In the latter half of the twelfth century he wrote a commentary to Homer's *Iliad*

on Homer, Theon[341] on Ptolemy, and the other commentators have done likewise.

I maintain also and have my sources to confirm it that our doctors and exegetes of the Holy Scriptures have to resort extensively to such commentaries, glosses and expositions in their comprehension of the Bible, if they wish to successfully withstand the challenges of other religions, for as Canon Law[342] says in, *c. ut veterum librorum dis. ix*; 'The truth in the books of the Old Testament must be examined[343] in the Hebrew texts for correct exposition'. If Rabbi Salomon's[344] expositions and discourses were deleted and excised from Nicholas of Lyre's texts on the Bible, I would say that the remainder, which Nicholas of Lyre himself composed, could be comprehended and understood in a few pages.[345]

Such commentaries cannot and should not be disposed of by the Christian Church, for they contain examples of the characteristics of the Hebrew language. They are essential for the understanding of the Holy Scriptures, especially the Old Testament, just as we would not like to be, nor should we be, without the Greek language, its grammars and commentaries on the

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and *Odyssey* while teaching at Constantinople. It is considered of great value to scholars, as it contains extracts from critics' scholia whose works are no longer extant. See the entry for 'Eustathios v. Thessalonike' in: *LThK*, vol. 3, col. 1204.

341 Theon of Alexandria († AD 365) was an Alexandrian philosopher and mathematician who wrote commentaries on Ptolemy. Reuchlin mentions in one of his letters that he was offered a copy of Theon's commentary, but it is unknown if he bought it as he apparently already possessed it. Theon's 'Commentary on Syntax' was included in Ptolemy's *Libri Almagesti* and was one of several texts on astronomy used as part of the curriculum at universities in the Middle Ages. These texts were written in Greek and only scholars well versed in the language were capable of interpreting them. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 116*, Aldo Manuzio to Reuchlin, pp. 366 372, here p. 370, and note 20. B. Price: *Medieval Thought*, p. 224. *Bibliotheca Palatina*, ed. Mittler (1986) pp. 350–351. Ptolemy: *Almagest*: *Transl. and Annotated* by Gerald J. Toomer (Princeton, 1998).

342 He refers to the section of Canon Law, which confirmed the necessity of the Hebrew language for correct translation of the Scriptures. It was based on St Jerome's evidence in a *Letter to Lucinius* and incorporated into the code. See Jerome Ep. 75 *Ad Lucinum CSEL* ed. I. Hilberg, vol. 55 (Vienna 1912) p. 6, 'The truth of the Old Testament must be sought in the Hebrew volumes' (*Ut veterum librorum fides de ebreis voluminibus examinanda est*) to indicate that such books were essential for the understanding of the truths in the Bible. Cited in F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 74, and note 42.

343 He uses a rare form of German to express his point here. The term he uses is 'gehandt habt' (close to English term 'handled') which is listed in Grimm for its unusual use meaning to give an opinion on a disputed matter. See the entry in: Grimm, vol. 10, col. 395.

344 See note 334.

345 Reuchlin seems to be quite self-assured of the influence of Salomon and dares to criticise one of the Church's renowned Bible scholars.

New Testament, as it states in the above-cited Canon Law, *Ut veterum*. For if I may be permitted to say with respect, there are many doctors in our Christian religion who through their lack of knowledge in the two languages of the Holy Scriptures render inaccurate expositions and are thus widely ridiculed. On no account, therefore, should anyone suppress the commentaries and glosses written by people in their own language, which they have learned diligently since their childhood, but wherever they are to be found, make them available, preserve, and hold them in great esteem as the fountain[346] out of which flows the real truth of | the language and the understanding of Holy Scripture. Therefore Canon Law rightly says in *ca. ieiunium lxxvi. distinc*. 'Many of our [scholars] said numerous things which contradict each other. Thus we are compelled and constrained to run to the Jews to seek the truth of knowledge from the fountain rather than from the rivulets',[347] cited verbatim (*haec ille*). Dvi^{r} = XIIII^{r}

If somebody should counter, I can do well enough with our commentaries, why do I need those of the Jews? He can be replied thus: If he has to 'make do' for himself in this manner, he is indeed a poor wretch, like somebody who has only a hose[348] to wear in winter. If one bears in mind further that our commentators dare to make expositions of the Scriptures which they themselves do not fully comprehend. Now anyone who is a lover of the truth cannot be satisfied with that state of affairs. Saint Hilary,[349] one of

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346 In a letter to the City Medical Officer of Ulm, Dr. Stocker, he says: 'We Latins drink out of the morass, the Greeks from the rivers, the Jews from the fountains' (*nos igitur latini paludem bibimus, graeci rivos, iudaei fontes*). See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 192*, Reuchlin to Johannes Stocker, pp. 247–260, here p. 250, L. 69–70. See Stefan Rhein, 'Der jüdische Anfang. Zu Reuchlins Archäologie der Wissenschaften', in Arno Herzig, Julius H. Schoeps, and Saskia Rohde (eds.): *Reuchlin und die Juden* (Sigmaringen, 1993), pp. 166–174, here p. 166. He uses a similar phrase in a letter to his brother Dionysius on the introduction to his *De rudimentis Hebraicis*: 'the fountain from which all theology has sprung' (*a quo fonte omnis theologia scaturivit*). Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 138*, Reuchlin to Dionysius Reuchlin, pp. 33–55, here p. 35, L. 22. Johannes Reuchlin: *Johann Reuchlins Briefwechsel*. Edited by Ludwig Geiger (Tübingen, 1875), *Letter 95* to Dionysius, pp. 88–100, here p. 89.

347 The citation is taken from St Jerome's commentaries on the Minor Prophets which were later adopted into Canon Law. See Jerome: *Comm. in Zachariam* IIc.8, v. 18–19 in: CCL vol. 76A ed. M. Adriaen (Turnhout 1970) p. 280. Cited in F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 75, and note 43.

348 Grimm records the original source and use of this proverb to be J. Reuchlin's *Augenspiegel*. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 10, col. 1839. Here it is intended to mean 'to help oneself as best one can'. Historically male clothing consisted of a doublet or jacket and hose.

349 Hilary of Poitiers (AD 315–367) was bishop of the same city. He wished to provide believers with the true meaning of the Scriptures and wrote a commentary on Matthew's Gospel. He also wrote on Greek theology and translated many treatises from Greek into Latin. His writings on God and the Son of God were considered difficult and cumbersome almost

the most learned scholars, composed short comments or notes on the Holy Scriptures, which have been accepted and praised by the entire Christian Church, but even he made many crass mistakes in his expositions of words due to his total lack of Hebrew. And as for his Greek, that was as light as the air, as Saint Jerome writes in a letter to Marcella[350] on Psalm cxxvi, and as he says in the letter he sent to Damasus[351] on 'Hosanna'. Similar errors are to be found in other texts as I have clearly exemplified in my book, *De Rudimentis Hebraicis* ('The Rudiments of Hebrew').

Furthermore, what shall I say to their books on preaching and disputation, to their breviaries and songbooks, to their books on liturgy, on their customs and devotions, other than repeat what has already been said and decreed by the praiseworthy emperors and their holinesses, the popes, namely: 'That nobody shall interfere with their synagogues, ceremonies, rites, habits, customs, and devotions, particularly, when they do not transgress our laws nor publicly deride our Christian Church. Other than this the Christian Church has no truck with them, except for the nine parts listed in the glosses'[352] *c. iudei ex. de iudeis*.

Therefore my counsel is that one should not confiscate, suppress nor burn the above-mentioned books; *c. Consuluit ex de iudeis et. l. iudeos. C. eo. ti*; except those that are defamatory or contain 'forbidden sciences'. |

Dvi^{v} = XIIII^{v}

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from the beginning, according to many scholars, as a consequence of his rather limited knowledge of Greek philosophy. See the entry for 'Hilarius v. Poitiers' in: *LThK*, vol. 5, cols. 337–338.

350 Jerome corrected Hilary's translation of a psalm from 'the labours of their fruits' to the more plausible 'labour of their hands'. Jerome had not criticised him for this misrepresentation as Reuchlin maintains, but pointed out that Hilary was not to be faulted for his lack of knowledge of Hebrew. See Jerome Ep. 34 *Ad Marcellam*: PL 22 449–450 as cited in: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke* p. 51. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 98–101.

351 He refers to Jerome's *Letter XX to Pope Damasus I* (AD 366–384) where he comments on the meaning of the word 'Hosanna'. In the text he uses the Latin form, *epistola ad Damasum de Osanna*. See Jerome Ep. 20 *Ad Damasum*: PL 22 376–379 as cited in: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke* p. 51. For an English translation see Jerome's *Letter XX to Pope Damasus*. in: The Principle Works of St Jerome *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church Second Series*. Translated into English with Prolegomena and explantory notes. Edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., Vol VI Jerome: *Letters and Select Works* (T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1892).

352 At his trial Hoogstraeten challenged Reuchlin on this point and cited Canonical ordinances to support his accusation, that Reuchlin countenanced Jewish beliefs in his interpretation of the law relating to their religious books. In the strict legal sense Hoogstraeten was correct, but from a moral point of view Reuchlin was justified in his arguments. S. Grayzel: *The Church and the Jews in the XIII Century* (New York, 1966), pp. 114–117. See the entry for '*Corpus iuris canonici*' in: *LMA*, vol. 3 (1986), cols. 263–270. F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 75, and note 44. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 110.

Finally to their books on philosophy, liberal arts, natural sciences and other related sciences listed in the sixth category of the previously mentioned division of Jewish books. I maintain these should be treated in the same manner as the books of other arts or sciences that are written in Latin, Greek, or German. Those sciences, which are not expressly forbidden, should be allowed. However, if Jewish books would be submitted that taught or propagated forbidden arts, such as magic, sorcery, or witchcraft, and if they were intended to harm people, these should be suppressed, torn up and burned as being contrary to nature; *l. cetere. ff. famil. hercis*. If, on the other hand, such books on witchcraft were only of use and for the good of humanity and not designed to harm anyone, then one should not confiscate or burn them; *tenet Azo. in summa. C. de malefi. et mathemat. circa. fi. fa. l. eorum. C. eo. ti. et in Bart*., except the books on buried treasure;[353] *l. j. C. de thesaur. li. x*.

Thus Your Princely Grace herewith has my answer to His Imperial Majesty's question, from which it can be inferred that in my opinion it is neither praiseworthy to God, nor useful to the Christian faith, nor would it be helpful in promoting greater devotion [to Christianity], if one were to high-handedly suppress or burn the books of the Jews, apart from those slanderous books called 'infamous scripts' (*libellos famosos*),[354] and those, as I have already said, on forbidden arts that are harmful to humanity, and hence cannot be tolerated. The Jews are our *Capsarii*,[355] librarians, antiquarians and preservers of the books from which we can derive the truth

[353] There were various tales associated with finding treasure in the earth, ranging from crocks of gold at the end of rainbows to chickens that laid golden eggs. These treasures were apparently guarded by good or evil spirits that prevented or aided the searcher in his effort to find them. Anything buried under a depth of three feet belonged to the Devil, and thus to obtain the treasure was difficult and dangerous. The searcher had to be familiar with the conditions under which he could extract it. Thus there were numerous calendars and books published with lists of people and professions likely to be successful guides to the most favourable times and places. On the various superstitions associated with buried treasure, see the entry for 'Schatz' in: *HAD*, vol. 7, cols. 1002–1006.

[354] Reuchlin does not state which books he was implying, but they would include all those listed as being harmful to morals or to Christian teaching and those registered or censured for their contents by Christians or Jews.

[355] The *capsarii* were Roman slaves who accompanied the children of Roman officials on their way to school and carried the boxes containing the utensils necessary for writing. His allocation of the term *capsarii* to the Jews as preservers of those books that were essential for Christians was in contradiction to the teaching of many professional theologians. On the *capsarii* see Suetonius: *Life of Nero*, chapter. 6. See also *Gutachten*, ed. Leinz-v. Dessauer, (1966), p. 115 and note 33.

of our religion, as Saint Thomas, the Church teacher, writes [in the letter to] the Romans, chapter 9, verse 2. (*capitulo ix. lect. ij. super verbo. Maior serviet minori*).[356]

In my opinion, therefore, the contrary arguments cited at the beginning of the text are not strong enough to challenge the grounds for my counsel.

The first argument states that the Jews composed their books to oppose the Christians, though, as cited previously, many of them were written before the birth of Christ, and were also composed for other faculties. But even if the books were directed against us, nevertheless, one should not burn them on that account, for the Jews wrote their books to benefit themselves, and to protect their religion against assaults, be it by heathen, Tartar, Turk or Christian, and were not written to deliberately harm, injure
Dvij^{r} = XV^{r} or cause scandal to anybody. |

This can be assumed because of their small number amongst us and as they are more willing to serve than to harm people. This is confirmed by Canon Law; *xx iij. q. ult. c. dispar*. Therefore it cannot be presumed nor suspected that their books are hostile to us, but that they were written solely for themselves. It is conceivable that I do something in my own interest that is both contrary and painful to you, but I do not act with evil intent, and therefore there are no legal grounds for you to file a suit against me; *l. i.* §. *Denique. Marcellus. ff. de aqua. plu. arc.*

Even if I were to presume that the Jews had purposely written their books against us, which I do not infer, and for which direct evidence would have to be adduced, even then one would be obliged to excuse them, for they may have written them not to slander anyone, but in their own defence. As we publicly reprimand them in our churches every year on Good Friday and call them, '*perfidos iudeos*', meaning, 'unfaithful Jews' and which in proper German means, 'those who keep neither their faith nor whom we can trust',[357] they could justifiably retort among themselves, 'they slander

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[356] The citation is from St Thomas Aquinas's (1225–1274) commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, chapter 9, 2. Aquinas wrote on the missionary aspects of the order. Reuchlin obviously wants to show proof that even such stalwarts of the Christian religion considered Jewish books worthy of preservation. It is rather ironic that Reuchlin should quote Thomas Aquinas to support his arguments to preserve Jewish books, whereas his opponent Hoogstraeten was also to cite the same author, but took a divergent view. See Thomas Aquinas Ep. *Ad Romanos* 9 2 in: Thomas Aquinas, *Opera Omnia*, ed. S.E. Frétt, vol. 20 (Paris 1876), p. 512, as cited in: *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) p. 52. Also in F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 75, and note 46.

[357] Reuchlin's criticism here of the Roman Catholic Church's practice of including in the Easter services a prayer for the so called *perfidos Iudaeos* ('unfaithful Jews'). See Commentary, p. 56.

us. We have never recanted our faith;' *iux. determinata Panor. in. c. Cum. te. ex. de sen. et re iudi. ix. col. ibi. Ego. vero. distinguo*.

What they may wish to say in words, they may also write quite clearly and extensively to exonerate themselves among their own people. As Aristotle says in *Peri hermenias*,[358] 'the text is a picture of the word'. Therefore there is no basis to the argument if somebody should say: 'The Jewish books should be burned, for they are hostile to us.' Furthermore it is quite evident that the Christian Church does not burn those other books, often with objectionable titles,[359]which are wilfully and insidiously[360] directed to weary and knock us down, such as the books of Porphyry,[361] Celsus,[362] Julian the Apostate, and others.

On the second argument where someone may say that such books revile Jesus, Mary, and the twelve Apostles, including us and our Christian laws. This would be a strong argument with good grounds for debate. Therefore, in the first section of my counsel I have set down my judgement on these books, wherever they are to be found. However, I have never seen or read any of those except for two, namely: the *Nizzachon* and *Tolduth Ieschu ha*

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[358] Here he partially cites Aristotle's *De interpretatione*, lines 16a 1–4, 'what is written signifies what comes out in the mouth'. See Abu-Nasr Muhammad Ibn-Muhammad al-Farabi: *Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's De interpretatione*: *Transl. with an Introduction and Notes* by F.W. Zimmermann (London, 1981), (repr. London, 1982), p. 10.

[359] Reuchlin's references to the books which opposed the early Christians appear to have come from Jerome's Letter to Magnus, Roman Orator. See the version in: Desiderius Erasmus: *Collected Works of Erasmus*; vol. 61; *Patristic Scholarship. The edition of St Jerome*, edited, translated and annotated by James F. Brady and John C. Olin (Toronto, 1992), pp. 201–206.

[360] In the German text Reuchlin uses the hendiadys 'mit uffsatz und stracks'. Grimm lists the *Augenspiegel* as the source for this phrase. I have been unable to find an equivalent in English, but it would be somewhat like 'resent and reprove' which would not fit the English text. The explanation given in the translation is that provided by Grimm's dictionary. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 1, col. 719.

[361] Reuchlin refers here Porphyry's 'Against the Christians' which was condemned and burnt in AD 388. See Porphyry: *Against the Christians*: *The Literary Remains*, *Edited and Transl. with an Introduction and Epilogue* by Joseph R. Hoffmann (Amherst, NY, 1994), pp. 147–151.

[362] Celsus was second-century philosopher who criticised Christianity in a text called 'True Doctrine' or 'True Word'. Very little is known of his life other than that written by his opponent Origen. He objected to the exclusive claims of the Christian Church and saw no difference between Christians and Jews in their belief or between their definitions of orthodoxy and heresy. He also criticised Christian philosophy for not accepting the religious status of the Roman Emperor. The Christian religion was, according to him, in reality an illegal cult, as it was led by an outlaw of the Roman state. He went on to make further accusations on Jesus' birth and the miracles. He supported campaigns against Christians for their rejection of state policy. See the entry for 'Kelsos' in: *LThK*, vol. 6, cols. 108–109.

nozri.[363] In all the other books, which I have seen or read up to now, I find no evidence of slander in them. For what concerns their religion, they maintain theirs is the true faith and that ours is untrue. |

Dvij^{v} = XV^{v}

There are several Jews who maintain that every nation should be permitted to retain its own religion; and just as we are not bound by the Mosaic Laws, likewise they are also not subject to Jesus' commandments, but are obliged to keep the Laws of Moses, for God gave these laws to them alone and not to anybody else. Therefore, we are obliged to keep Jesus' commandments because God gave them to us. Thus, everything they write which is meant to show that Jesus cannot be God, and what follows from that is their belief and it is not their intention thereby to slander anyone.[364] And this precept has been accepted and tolerated by the Christian Church for the past 1400 hundred years and it was never considered to mean slander;[365] *c. consuluit. in fi. ex. de iude*. Jesus appeared here on earth as man and servant, as St Paul writes to Philipp. 2.[366] (*ad Philipp ij*). It is in this form, and in no other, that the Jews respected him.[367] They did not consider Him, His Mother or the Apostles to be divine and continue to think so. Whether that is to be considered slander is a question I would refer to the judicial discretion of those who wrote the articles on the Civil Code; l. *Jtem apud*. §. *Si quis virgines. ff. de iniur*., and to those who have written the references in Canon Law; *c. in audientia ex. de. sent. ex*.

Now to the third argument, where it is said the books are 'false'.

This is something I cannot fully understand. Firstly, the term 'false' is applied in different situations. Sometimes we refer to books as being 'erroneous', meaning those which have not been corrected properly, as for example where a word has been omitted or has one too many or where the letters have been incorrectly written. These solecisms demand no particular punishment other than one must revise and correct such books, if we are to

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363 He had already listed these at the beginning of the *Augenspiegel*.

364 In this passage Reuchlin expresses understanding and tolerance for the arguments of Jewish savants and appears quite willing to accept that they had every reason to protest at their treatment by Christians.

365 Reuchlin was later requested to correct this statement as it was disapproved of by Hoogstraeten. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 195*, Konrad Kollin to Reuchlin, pp. 274–278, here p. 278, and note 17.

366 Phil. 2–7. Reuchlin was accused of quoting this section of the Bible to support the arguments used in Judaism for the rejection of Jesus, thereby misusing the Bible to the detriment of the Christian religion. See H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, pp. 46–47.

367 Reuchlin refers here to the Catholic Church's teaching on Incarnation, i.e. that Jesus Christ is both God and Man.

understand them correctly. If one were to burn all those books for having been incorrectly written and copied, then one would have to burn many copies of the Holy Bible. And if there are some who do not believe me, they should read the second preface of St Jerome's book on the Paralipomena,[368] his introduction to the Book of Job,[369] and his other writings, particularly the letter he writes to Lucinius Beticus[370] where he says, one scribe writes more mistakes than the other. St Augustine[371] makes the same point in a missive or epistle he wrote to St Jerome in *i. parte. Hieronymi. epi. c. vi*. If therefore one were to burn the books that are erroneous, that is those which were written or printed incorrectly, then one would certainly have to burn Pliny's useful work on 'Natural History' (*Naturalis historia*),[372] because it has never been correctly transcribed in hundreds of years, and in fact all editions contain many errors. And did not the first copyist of Matthew's Gospel err in his transcription, as | St Jerome says to Hedibia[373] about that passage in Mathew (*super illud Matthei: Arundinem quassatam non confringet*).): 'He does not break a bruised reed' Dviij^{r} = XVI^{r}

Secondly, sometimes one also calls an assertion 'false', meaning that it is 'incorrect', as the term is generally applied in philosophy and in legal

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368 See Jerome: *Praefatio in librum Paralip. Juxta LXX interpretes*: PL 29, 423–426 as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 54. This was part of Jerome's prefaces to the books of the Vulgate version of the Old Testament and references to the incomplete versions of the Books of Samuel and Kings. See the entry for 'Chronik' in: *LThK*, vol. 2, cols. 1184–1185.

369 See Jerome: *Praefatio in librum Iob*: PL 29, 63, as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 54.

370 See Jerome: Ep. 71 PL 22, 671 as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 54.

371 See Augustine: Ep. 40: PL 33, 157; Ep. 82 PL, 33 278, as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 54. For an English translation see St Augustine: *Letter XL to Jerome*, chapter 3; translated by J.G. Cunningham. From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series*, vol. 1. Edited by Philip Schaff. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. See also the entry for 'Augustinus' in: *LThK*, vol. 1, cols. 1094–1101.

372 Pliny (AD 23–79) is also known as Pliny the elder. This encyclopaedic work, a tome of 37 volumes, was one of the well-known books used in the Middle Ages. In the fifteenth century they were studied in depth as part of the classical revival, but greater emphasis was placed on philological and textual analysis and mistakes were discovered in the text. The first Latin printed version appeared in 1469 at Venice and was followed by fourteen further Latin editions. Hence Reuchlin's reference here is to the errors which frequently occurred in transcription. On the book see *Bibliotheca Palatina*, ed. Mittler (1986) pp. 251–252.

373 The letter contained twelve questions on the Bible which Jerome was asked to explain their meaning. Reuchlin cites the Latin text of the Bible passage in Matthew 12, 20. It is possible that in Reuchlin's era these two letters were combined into one letter i.e. to Hedibia. See Jerome, Ep. 120 *Ad Hedibiam*, PL 22, 980–1006, as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 55.

science, as for example, false grounds (*falsa causa*); incorrect exposition (*falsa demonstratio*); incorrect grammar (*falsa grammatica*); incorrect proposition (*falsa relatio*); incorrect nomination (*falsa denominatio*), and for such use there is no punishment or penalty; *dan. l. corne*; nor is it an error or lie; *l. quid sit falsum in fi. ff. ad l. cor. de fal.* And according to the Cornelian Civil Law Code neither is it considered deception or a lie to tell untruths in a narration or a lecture nor will the person be punished for it; only if he presents false evidence; *sic Bal. in l. quinque ult. col. C. de ser. fugi.* Perhaps in this respect, Jewish books can be considered false according to our point of view, but they are not in their opinion or according to their religion; *fa. l. in synagoga. C. de iude*. The law specifically says on this, that if a person wishes to take proceedings against the Jews, he should not harm them in their house of worship. The gloss on the word 'house of worship' (*domus religionum*) says in: *s. iudeorum. q. ad. eorum opinionem religiosa*, which is almost saying, 'they themselves consider it a holy and contemplative place'.[374]

Thirdly, a thing is called 'false' when the true statement of another is maliciously tampered with or suppressed in order to harm that person. [Cited] *in auten. de instru. caut. col. vi. circa. prin. iunc. l. Nec. exemplum C. ad l. corne. de fal.* Now I am not aware of any other nation on this earth apart from the Jews who have given more meticulous attention to ensuring that Holy Scripture is copied correctly, for they have systematically arranged the Bible so that one can tell how many verses, or passages are in each book, which they call '*Pesukim*'.[375] It is also possible to establish how frequently a particular word occurs in the Bible. Then there is also the Massorah on the Bible canon. These are notes on the text whereby the reader can ascertain if a letter has been omitted or added. I have not read of such notes in any other language nor heard of them. It is true that there are a number of insignificant alterations in the texts, which they say Ezra and Nehemiah[376]

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[374] He cites the legal commentary to the Justinian Codex on the term *domus religionum*. See F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 76, and note 51.

[375] His extensive knowledge of the Hebrew Bible becomes apparent here as his explanation accords with modern scholarship. The word 'Pesukim' is a Hebrew term meaning minute divisions. For references to the term see: Anthony Maas "Scripture." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 13, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912). Accessed: 4 May 2012 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13635b.htm>.

[376] Today the books of Ezra and of Nehemiah are considered to be one. These texts are considered to have been written between 400 and 300 BC. For Ezra's influence on the compilation of the Old Testament see: *CHB*, vol. 1, pp. 122–144. *RSV*, p. 573 and p. 586. See also the entry for 'Nehemias' in: *LThK*, vol. 7, cols. 868–869.

corrected, and amount to xvi in number. For example it says in Gen. 18:[377] 'Abraham still stood before the Lord'; prior to Ezra and Nehemiah's time it supposedly said in the same part: 'And God stood before God'; again in the first chapter (*capitulo primo*) of Habakkuk[378] where it says: 'My Holy One. We shall not die'. Formerly it said, 'My Holy One, and you shall not die' etc. Such alterations have been done not to deceive anyone, as they themselves have indicated wherever the alterations were made. St Jerome and also the lxxij translators[379] have incorporated these changes into their Latin and Greek translations of the Bible well over a thousand years ago. Beyond that I cannot find any evidence where it could be truthfully proven, that they falsified their books. | Dviij^{v} = XVI^{v}

One finds corresponding texts [of the Bible] in both the East and the West, apart from the expressions where their grammarians dispute amongst themselves, like our the debates about Ermolao Barbaro's '*Castigationes*' on Pliny.[380] These disputations can be regarded, however, purely as academic.

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377 Gen. 18, 22.

378 Hab. 1, 12.

379 Reuchlin refers here to the legend of the first translation of the Septuagint from its original language Hebrew into Greek by seventy-two translators. The legend was based on a fraudulent letter that had appeared between 150 BC and AD 50. It purported to relate that the translation had been carried out at the request of the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–246 BC). According to the tale he sent one of his courtiers, Aristeas, to Jerusalem to speak to one of the high priests, and it was agreed that twelve groups of six translators from each of the twelve tribes of Israel should come together on the island of Pharos to translate the five books of Moses. They completed their task in 72 days and on presenting their work to the community of Greek Jews at Alexandria it was found to be a highly accomplished work. It was given the Greek name *Septuagint*, meaning seventy, and in Latin, '*Interpretatio septuaginta virorum*' (the translation of the seventy men). The number seventy, rather than seventy-two, was chosen probably because of the traditional symbolism of this number in the Bible. See *CHB*, vol. 1, pp. 142–155. See also Heinrich A. Mertens: *Handbuch der Bibelkunde*: *Literarische, historische, archäologische, religionsgeschichtliche, kulturkundliche, geographische Aspekte des Alten und Neuen Testamentes* (Düsseldorf, 1997), pp. 45–46.

380 Barbaro's biography was in many ways similar to Reuchlin's, as he also studied jurisprudence and became a doctor of law before pursuing a career mainly concerned with critically examining the works of classical antiquity, and in publishing emendatory editions. Barbaro published the *Castigationes Plinianae* (Rome, 1493) where he says that he found more than 5,000 errors in the texts then in use, and in another publication, *Pomponius Mela*, the number of errors was over 300. Reuchlin points to the debates in 1492 and 1493 between secular humanists who challenged contemporary viewpoints held by traditional scholars on classical literature and on the teachings of the Church. Barbaro presented Reuchlin with a valuable decorative manuscript of plants. L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 31–34. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 44*, Demetrios Chalkondyles to Reuchlin, pp. 134–142, here p. 139, and note 5, for biographical details of Barbaro.

The reason, perhaps, why many of our scholars maintain the Jews have deliberately falsified their Bible could be due to the numerous Bible translations.[381] First, there is the Chaldean version by Onkelus,[382] and Jonathan;[383] second, the Greek edition by the lxxij translators; third, that of Aquila;[384] fourth, that of Symmachus;[385] fifth, the Theodotion[386] version; sixth, the

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381 Reuchlin's extensive knowledge of the history of the Bible is evidenced by his listing of the various versions that existed prior to Jerome's edition. Present day research suggests his listings are somewhat inaccurate, but at the time of his writing it indicates his in depth study of the available resources. He draws attention to the divergent text traditions of the Old Testament which existed in the early Christian period.

382 The *Targum Onqelos* (Onkelos) is a literal rendering of the Massoretic text. It is believed to have been redacted in the second to the fourth centuries AD. It is not clear who the real editor was, although the name Onkelos is associated with the text and his name appears in the Talmud. See L. Geiger: *Johann Reuchlin*, pp. 105–106. W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 89–96. See the entry for 'Bible translations' in: *EJ* (2007), ed. F. Skolnik vol. 3, pp. 589–590 and for 'Onkelos' in *EJ* (2007), ed F. Skolnik vol. 15, pp. 433–434. In his *De rudementis Hebraicis* he mentions some of these Targumin. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 152*, Nikolaus Ellenbog to Reuchlin, pp. 96–100, here p. 98 and p. 99, and note 6.

383 He refers here to one of the standard interpretations ('Targumin') to the Prophets in the Hebrew text by Jonathan ben Uzziel. Reuchlin obtained this manuscript while in Rome in 1498, for which he paid eleven gold Guldens. It was listed in his library under the title 'Targum des Ionathan'. The manuscript is believed to date from the twelfth or early thirteenth century and is known today as the 'Karlsruher Prophetencodex', the oldest Massoretic manuscript in Europe. W. von Abel and R. Leicht: *Verzeichnis der Hebraica*, pp. 97–103, here p. 102 and note 28. See *CHB*, vol. 2, pp. 1–26, and also the entry for 'Bibelübersetzungen', in: *TRE*, vol. 6, and pp. 216–228.

384 Aquila was a Jewish proselyte who translated the Old Testament into Greek during the reign of Emperor Hadrian. Jerome was to make many references to his translation in his efforts to render a true and correct translation. See the CHB vol. 1, p. 545. Also the entry for 'Aquila' in: *LThK*, vol. 2, cols 379–380.

385 Reuchlin used the letters of Q. Aurelius Symmachus (ca. 345–402) in his lectures while teaching at the University of Basle in 1477. They were part of a series he gave on Greek rhetoric. He apparently possessed some manuscripts by Symmachus in 1510, as Beatus Rhenanus writes to borrow them. The *Symmachus* translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek is from the second century AD. Very little is known of the translator except the reference to his translation in Jerome's letters. It appears he aimed to present his translation in perfect Greek style. Whether the author of manuscripts and the translator are one and the same person is unclear. See K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', p. 37, and note 18. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 1*, Reuchlin to Konrad [Wölfflin], pp. 9–11, here p. 11, and note 8. See the entry for 'Symmachos' in: *LThK*, vol. 2, col. 380. See also the reference to the Bible translations in *CHB*, vol. 2, pp. 1–26.

386 The Theodotion edition was not a new translation, but a revision of both Aquila's and Symmachus's with the addition of some missing words or passages that had been omitted from the two previous versions. This version first appeared in the second century AD. See the entry for 'Theodotion' in: *LThK*, vol. 2, col. 380.

version in Origen's Hexapla;[387] seventh, the Vulgate edition;[388] eighth, the version by 'Anonymous';[389] and ninth, the version without a title by an unknown author.[390] Jerome took all of these into account when he compiled and translated the tenth version of the Bible into Latin.[391] You can find confirmation of this in his commentaries. The oldest text of the Jews existed before all of these and is the most uncorrupted. It is no wonder, therefore,

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[387] Origen (AD 185–254) produced a recension of the Septuagint based on the Hebrew text. It was a colossal work with an estimated 6,500 pages. It has six columns with the Hebrew text in quadratic script first, and beside it transcriptions of the other extant translations. It was known as the *Hexapla* because of its six columns. Current research indicates there is no extant version of it. Its existence is known mainly through Jerome's letters and other writers' texts. See Alison Salvesen (ed.): *Origen's Hexapla and Fragments*: *Papers Presented at the Rich Seminar on the Hexapala* (Tübingen, 1998), pp. 3–15; 421–436. See *CHB*, vol. 1, pp. 530–531 and vol. 2, pp. 1–26.

[388] A reference probably to the old Latin versions (*Vetus Latina versio*), editions of which were in use in parts of the Roman Empire in the third century AD, where Greek was not the common language. The Church at Rome used Greek as the official language and hence Greek versions of the Bible were used there. However, in the provinces Latin was spoken and thus the need developed for a Latin version. The origin of this version is unknown, but is thought to be in North Africa or in Syria, although there is some discussion on this point by Biblical scholars, as it is also possible that the translations were done in various places wherever they were required. See *CHB*, vol. 2, pp. 37–39. H.A. Mertens: *Handbuch der Bibelkunde*, pp. 45–49.

[389] Reuchlin's reference to an anonymous version of the Bible is difficult to identify, but may refer to one-volume Bibles ('Pandects') or books containing groups of the Gospels. Some of these appeared for missionary purposes and for individual requirements. Research shows that sections of the *Vulgate* Bible, excluding the Gospels, were edited by an unknown writer at Rome in the latter part of the fourth century. One can only speculate that this was the edition Reuchlin refers to here. The present use of the term 'Bible' refers to the standardised book, whereas in Reuchlin's era variations on its contents existed. Following a decree of the Council of Trent in 1546 the Bible became standardised for use by Catholics. See *CHB*, vol. 2, p. 108.

[390] This was probably based on Augustine's description of a version of the Bible translated by an unknown scholar. In his major work *De civitate Dei* he writes, 'There were others who translated these sacred oracles out of the Hebrew tongue into Greek, as Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and also that translation which, as the name of the author is unknown, is quoted as the fifth edition, a work completed at the beginning of the fifth century, yet the Church has received this Septuagint translation just as if it were only one'. The citation from Augustine appears in: *CHB*, vol. 1, p. 545.

[391] Jerome's Latin *Vulgate* Bible was the orthodox version used by the Roman Catholic Church in Reuchlin's lifetime. It had first been redacted and translated by Jerome at the request of Pope Damasus who wished to have a revised standard version instead of the various translations then in circulation. Jerome had seen Origen's *Hexapla* at Caesarea before it was destroyed, and it greatly influenced his attitude towards the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. He was convinced that the Hebrew text was essential for exegetical study of the Bible, a view his admirer, Reuchlin, warmly endorsed. Raphael Loewe, 'The medieval history of the Latin Vulgate', in: *CHB*, vol. 2, pp. 102–154. H.A. Mertens: *Handbuch der Bibelkunde*, pp. 45–49.

with so many translations and explanations[392] that marked divergences and inaccuracies have occurred. That is to say they could contain a number of errors and erroneous renderings, as indeed they do, as the aforementioned St Jerome writes in his commentary on Ezek. 40, where it says: 'And behold the wall'. (*Ezech. xl. ca. super versu. Et ecce murus*).[393] Here he quite clearly states that nearly all the Hebrew words and names in the Greek and Latin translations are archaic, corrupted, or are rendered inaccurately by careless and unlearned translators. Therefore, if an unlearned person translates from erroneous[394] books, without sufficient knowledge of the original language, then mistakes will occur and Hebrew words will be confused with Sarmatian,[395] Bohemian, or Hungarian,[396] or they may even become meaningless; 'for when it ceases to be a Hebrew term it does not then become another word', cited verbatim (*haec ille*).

We should be guided by Canon Law; *ix. dis. c. ut veterum* on, all these problems of translation, where it says, that in questions of doubt or error in the Old Testament we have a 'place of refuge' in the Jewish books. It is a good sign, therefore, that the Christian Church considers them to be the most accurate and does not regard them as false.

If therefore somebody were to assert that the expositions of the Jewish scholars were false, and we use those same scholars for the benefit of our faith, cite them as proof and assert their opinions in evidence as

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[392] Reuchlin uses the German term 'fursprechen'. Grimm gives Reuchlin's text as the source for this particular meaning of the term. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 4, col. 835.

[393] He refers to Jerome's Commentary on Ezekiel 40, 5 which became incorporated into Canon Law. See F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 76, and note 52. See Jerome: *Commentarium in Ezechielem XXII, cap XL*: Pl 25, 376 c–d. as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 56.

[394] The term he uses is 'ungerechte'. This is explained to mean 'incorrect' by Grimm and the *Augenspiegel* cited as its source. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 24, col. 803.

[395] Reuchlin's reference is unclear as he does not say expressly which language he means. On the one hand it could signify simply the language of the residents of what is now Poland which in the sixteenth century was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The gentry of that state began to live a fashionable lifestyle called 'Sarmatian' thus portraying them to be descendents of the ancient culture of Sarmatia. On the other hand it may refer to the language of the Sarmatian tribe, as described in classical literature. The Sarmatians were an ancient nomadic tribe found in Iran, who later dominated the Greek culture around the Black Sea in the centuries prior to the Christian era. Here again Reuchlin shows his superior knowledge of languages and history. His choice of using Sarmatian to illustrate his point was probably due to the language's antiquity, thereby raising its existence to a level with Hebrew. See Janos Harmatta: *History of the Sarmatian Language* (Szeged, 1970).

[396] The choice of these two examples of East European languages, Bohemian and Hungarian, were representative of all languages of the East.

stated above, then we could be accused of having introduced false testimony, which is forbidden by law; *l. si falsos. C. eo. ti*. Be that as it may, a scholar usually expounds Scripture according to his best | ability. It is inconsequential if his exposition is correct or incorrect, he does not commit an illegal act unless he deliberately introduces a falsified text as evidence; *l. fi. ff. de fal*. Otherwise one simply says he errs, for it is quite obvious that no one is obliged to accept the writings or opinions of any other scholar. Therefore he cannot be accused of deception; *l. in i. in glo. mag. C. de leg*.[397] My response consequently to the aforesaid argument is that irrespective of whether something has been found false, untrue or deceptive in the Jewish texts, there is not sufficient justification in law to burn such books; *ad hoc allego Bart. in l. quid sit falsum ubi dicit non puto quod pro quolibet dolo et qualibet deceptione quis incidat in falsum ut puniatur. l. cornelia de fal. nisi sit de capitulis expressis in hoc titulo. Hec ille*. E^{r} = XVII^{r}

Next to the fourth argument, where it is said the Jews obstinately persist in their Jewish faith because of their books on which they have been raised from childhood, and are thus less persuaded to convert to Christianity, I say: It may be true that what one learns in youth is held onto until old age. Virgil says something similar in the *Georgica*,[398] Book 2: 'So much effect has habit on the young'; and Horace[399] in the second letter to Maximus Lollius: 'A new pot retains, long after, the taste of that which was first cooked in it.' These maxims, however, often do not apply, but it happens quite frequently, that those who are inept in their youth become quite adept in old age and outshine others, as Valerius Maximus[400] says in chapter 9 of his sixth book (*li. vi. ca. ix*).

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[397] There is an error in J. Reuchlin: *Gutachten*, ed. Leinz-v. Dessauer, (1966), p. 93. where the legal reference is given as: *l. in l. in glo. Mag. C. de leg*.

[398] Publius Vergilius Maro (70–19 BC) was a Roman author who spent most of his life near the Gulf of Naples. His most well-known works were the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*. At an early stage of his life Reuchlin already possessed a manuscript or printed edition of the author's complete works. See Virgil: *Georgics*, II 47–82. For an English translation see *The Georgics*: *Transl. into English Verse with an Introduction and Notes* by L.P. Wilkinson (Harmondsworth, 1984). See also K. Preisendanz: 'Die Bibliothek Johannes Reuchlins', pp. 35–43.

[399] See Horace: Ep. 1, 2, 69–70 as cited cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 57. Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65–68 BC) was a Roman soldier, a government administrator and a writer of satires and epodes. See Horace: *Satires and Epistles*: *A Verse Transl. with Introduction and Notes* by Niall Rudd (Harmondsworth, 1973), (revised ed. Harmondsworth, 1989), line 69, p. 135.

[400] See Valerius Maximus: *Facta et dicta* 6, 9 as cited cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 57. Valerius Maximus, a Roman chronicler, whose work *Factorum et*

But let us leave the Romans aside and return to the Jews. Our Apostle Paul studied the complete Jewish wisdom[401] and attended a rabbinical school. What became of him? The greatest of all our Apostles! Somebody may say, but 'God drew him there'. Christ answers him, in John 6:[402] 'No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him'. Therefore, such a statement is not a valid objection, for all of us who have come to the Christian faith have been drawn to it. 'We are not born Christians, but made Christians', as says St Jerome in a letter to Athleta[403] on the education of her daughter. The words of Christ come to our ears and from there to the heart and from the heart to the will, and from the will to perception, from where we then derive our faith. Thus St Paul says in the Letter to the Romans, 10:[404] 'So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ'. I understand this to mean that he, who is willing
E^{v} = XVII^{v} to listen, is also willing to believe, | and whoever is unwilling to listen, is unwilling to believe. Now somebody will be more willing to listen to the Christian faith who has previously had practice in those matters by which faith becomes apparent to the senses, as Aristotle says in 'On the soul',[405] book two (*De anima ij*): 'The effect of something is much more efficacious, if the mind is receptive to it beforehand.'

Now, if I want to make something credible to a rational person, then I must appeal to his intellect in a manner that is acceptable to his understanding so that, if in doubt, he will freely tend more towards acceptance rather than to rejection. When a matter is made evident in such a light, then the will unites with the intellect and this then leads to faith.

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dictorum memorabilium libri novem consisted of nine volumes of history and comments on Roman events, written around the year 31 BC. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter* 116 and note 33.

401 Reuchlin's praise of St Paul, and regarding him superior to the other Apostles for his Jewish learning, became an additional point of censure by the Chief Inquisitor Hoogstraeten. He charged Reuchlin with having ignored St Paul's description of his conversion as in 2 Cor. 12, and it was that which should be the true reason for raising him above the other Apostles. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 48.

402 John 6, 44.

403 See Jerome: Ep. 107 *Ad Laetam*: PL 22, 868 as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 58.

404 Rom. 10, 17.

405 See Aristotle: *De Anima* II, 414a, as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 58. I have not been able to establish the identical lines to which Reuchlin refers, as his Latin edition may have had a different text and divisions to the standard present day versions. The reference I have cited is the closest to the original German. The English text

According to the writings of our learned doctors of the Scriptures, these are the means whereby man's intellect receives the light of truth, namely: through the predictions of the prophets; through the conformity of the Scriptures with the prophecies; through the masterly teachings of the books and the exposition of their contents according to reason and the rejection of opposing arguments as being contrary to reason; through debates pointing out the unreason of every heresy that arises; by the steadfastness of the Christian Church, and through the public performance of signs and wonders.[406] The unbeliever, therefore, will be led to believe in matters that he had previously doubted and perceived to be contrary to reason by means of these eight points. It is obvious that a learned Jew is more likely to be converted by reasoned arguments than an unlearned one.[407] I say 'by reasoned arguments' because I am not talking about those who come to us out of jealousy, hatred, fear of punishment, poverty, for protection from vengeance, ambition, pursuit of pleasure, or just being simple-minded, and for such similar reasons, and wish to become Christians only in word and name. I have known many of those and no good ever came of them. They believe as much in one thing as in the other, and if matters do not proceed to their liking on our side, then they run to Turkey[408] and become Jews again. I am not talking of those wily[409] ones, but of those courageous, honest Jews and

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reads 'as it is the nature of the entelechy of each thing to be in what is potentially it and in its own matter'. See Aristotle: *De anima II*, (*On the Soul*): *Transl. with an Introduction and Notes* by Hugh Lawson-Tancred (London, 1986), II, 414a.

406 Rom. 15–19.

407 Here Reuchlin emphasises the point that only through intellectual debate can conversion to Christianity take place, and that the notion of forceful conversion would be contrary to the intellect. Thus he quite clearly rejects any form of coercive measures as advocated by many of his contemporaries.

408 B. Lewis: *The Jews of Islam*, pp. 62–64; 172; 280. Also an account of the Jews under Turkish rule in D. Englander, D. Norman, et al.: *Culture and Belief in Europe, 1450–1600*, pp. 303–307.

409 Reuchlin uses the term 'Schalachbuben'. F. Lotter, basing his view on Hebrew sources, maintains it could be a play on the word 'Schalantjude', referring to poverty stricken Jews who wandered from place to place and lived on the alms provided by the community. Whether Reuchlin's knowledge of Hebrew was sufficient to enable him to make such derivates is not easy to ascertain. In my view it is also possible that he derived the term from 'schalkhafter' as given in German to mean, 'cunning' or 'treacherous'. See the entry in: *Grimm*, vol. 14, col. 2077. F. Lotter: 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 76, and note 54. See also Yacov Guggenheim: 'Meeting on the road: encounters between German Jews and Christians on the margins of society', in R. Po-chia Hsia, and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.): *In and out of the Ghetto*: *Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 125–136.

Jewesses who see how and where they err, and recognise and understand the error of their ways and for the sake of truth and the will of God can be led to our Christian faith. Therefore, I give my answer to the fourth argument
Eij[r] = XVIII[r] mentioned above, and say that the books are not the real | reason why the Jews do not convert to the Christian faith, as is said in Luke 16: 'They have Moses and the prophets'.[410] On the contrary, the existence of these books would make it easier to convert [them], if we were proficient in their language and had adept people who would deal with them sensibly. As proof of this I mention the account given in *Fortalitium fidei*[411] Book 3, consideration 12, where the master writes that one of the most wise and erudite Jews came and spoke at length about faith and said to him: 'That he truly believed in the Christian faith and that he was led to it by assiduous study of the texts, not alone of the Bible, but also of the Talmud and of philosophy', cited verbatim (*haec ille*). Master Petrus Alfonsi,[412] master Alfonsus,[413] master John of Podico,[414] Master Jerome the convert,[415] [and] master Paul of Burgos,[416] were all converted in a similar manner. I would much rather have these in our religion than four hundred card-painting[417] or other profiteering Jews.

If, for the sake of argument, I were to impute that the Talmud was the cause of their not converting to Christianity, nevertheless it would not give me the right to confiscate and burn their possessions, for I have no authority to judge them.[418] The Jew is one of Our Lord God's creatures just as much as I am.[419] Where he stands, he also stands before his God. Where he falls, he also

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410 Luke 16, 29. Again here he cites in Latin: *Luce xvi. Habent Moysen et prophetas.*

411 As notes 171 and 235.

412 As note 238.

413 As note 239.

414 As note 240.

415 As note 241.

416 As notes 82, 172 and 232.

417 There were many legends associated with cards and card players. It was believed to be the Devil's prayer book or one of his games, and hence those who played them were considered to be in league with him. The four colours also had a symbolic significance; red for example represented the blood spent while playing cards. The numbers and signs on the cards could be read for their mystical symbolism and as guides to decisions in everyday life. Jews had the ability to read and write, a trait limited to an elite amongst Christians, and writing was considered by many unlearned to have magical powers. Therefore, cards engraved by Jews would have been given great credence for their magical demonic powers. I have been unable to establish a direct link between Jews and the colouring or pasting of cards, but Reuchlin obviously wished to suggest that there were undesirable people of devious character involved in this practice who were willing to convert to Christianity, but would never become true believers. See entry for 'Kartenspiel' in: *HDA*, vol. 4, cols. 1015–1020.

418 Rom. 14, 4.

419 This statement provides a clear insight into how Reuchlin considered the Jews as equal

falls before his God. Each and every one shall give an account of himself.[420] Why should we judge the soul of another? The Lord God is powerful enough to pass judgement on him. St Paul, the Apostle, quite clearly says this in his letter, Rom. 14.[421] Furthermore we also know from the Gospel, that Our Lord strongly rebuked his disciples James and John for their desire to burn a city of unbelievers that had refused to admit Christ and his disciples, Luke, chapter 9.[422] Accordingly, therefore, I do not blame the authorities for their inaction, for they do not sanction this evil act, though they did permit it to take place; *dicit c. Consuluit de iudeis et Augustinus de Ancona in libro de ecclesiastica potestate. q. xxiiij.* §. *ad secundum*; and they cannot prevent it without doing an injustice to the people and that should not be.[423]

Finally, to end the matter at issue, I cannot really believe that anything positive would be achieved for our Christian faith, nor would it add to the glory of God, if we were to burn their books. On the contrary, I can well conceive that it would cause a lot of harm. | Eij^{v} = XVIII^{v}

First: the Jews may say we take away their weapons and are afraid of them, that they outclass us in disputes, and outdo us in reasoning. It would be as if a duke wanted to challenge a shepherd to a fight, but first took away his staff, sword or knife, while the duke retained all his weapons.

Second: The Jews may write anew stranger things, even more evil than those in existence at present, and could say to their children in a hundred years from now that the books which were burned contained all of this.

Third: they may say hereafter that our doctors [of theology] made false allegations against their books, incorrectly cited them, and distorted what they had written. Then we would have no 'place of refuge' to resort to for reference.

Fourth: Forbidden fruit is sweetest. Therefore their rabbis and masters would emigrate to Turkey, study there, then return and zealously teach their young even greater evil than they had ever learnt previously.

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beings before God, and indicates his level of tolerance towards non-Christians in an era where they were considered to be a threat to the very existence of society.

420 Rom. 14, 12.

421 Rom. 14, 4.

422 Luke 9, 54–55.

423 Reuchlin bases his argument on the writings of Augustinus of Ancona, also called 'Augustinus Triumphus' (1243–1328). He was professor of Scripture at the Sorbonne University and wrote on Canon Law. Reuchlin refers to Augustinus' interpretation of the Canon Law code and cites the corresponding paragraph. In his main work *Summa de potestate ecclesiastica* which was composed in 1320, Augustinus emphasises the power of the papacy and the unity of the Church, a view Reuchlin shared. See the entry for 'Augustinus Triumphus' in: *LMA*, vol. 1, col. 1230.

Fifth: it may also happen that as the world changes from year to year, we might have an urgent need of such books for the Councils and synods of the Church, as happened at the Council of Basle,[424] where cardinal John of Ragusa[425] introduced Mohammad's book, the Koran. Then we would be willing to pay out a lot not to have them burned, as happened to the Romans, when king Tarquinius Priscus burned all the books of the Sibyl Amalthea, except for the last three, for which he then had to pay three hundred guldens of pure gold and greatly regretted that he had burned the others.[426]

Sixth: we are forbidden to dispute publicly with heretics who have fallen from our faith; *l. damanto et. l. quicumque C. de heret*. But we should rightly dispute and converse with the Jews that we may induce them to the [Christian] faith; *c. quam sit laudabile et ibi glo. i. ex de iude. iuncto. xxiij. q. iiij. c. infideles*. If their books were burned, what sources could we refer to then, except the text of the Bible? But that is of no use as Holy Canon Law rightly says in; *xxxvij dis. c. relatum*; many words in the Holy Scriptures can be inferred to

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424 The Council of Basle (1431–1448) attempted to deal with a number of threats to the Church's orthodoxy and unity. It was confronted with serious challenges, among them the growth in followers of the declared heretic Jan Hus, the rivalry between princes of the Holy Roman Empire and the Church, and the question of the Western Church's reunification with the Eastern Church. The Council agreed to implement a reform of the Church's finances and of clerical conduct. See Joachim W. Stieber: *Pope Eugenius IV, the Council of Basle and the Secular and Ecclesiastical Authorities in the Empire: the Conflict over Supreme Authority and Power in the Church* (Leiden, 1978). Stefan Sudmann: *Das Basler Konzil: Synodal-Praxis zwischen Routine und Revolution* (Frankfurt am Main, 2005).

425 He refers to Johannes Stojkovic of Ragusa († 1443). He took part in the Councils held at Lausanne and Basle. A member of the Dominican Order, he was later to bequeath his entire collection of books to the Dominican priory at Basle. Reuchlin had a friendly relationship with the monastery and subsequently wrote to the prior requesting to borrow a Greek copy of the New Testament that had been donated by the cardinal. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 26*, Reuchlin to Jakob Lauber, pp. 81–89, here p. 87, and note 18.

426 The reference here is to the most celebrated of the Sibyllae, who were said to have been inspired to foretell the future. She was reputed to have lived at Cumae, also called Amalthea, in southern Italy. According to the tale, the Sibyl came to the palace of Tarquinius Superbus the Second with nine volumes of prophecies which she offered to sell at a high price. He initially refused to buy them. The Sibyl returned at a later stage, having meanwhile burned three of the volumes, and asked the same price for the remaining six. Again he refused and she burned three more. She finally returned again, but by this time Tarquin had realised the value of the lost volumes, yet she demanded the same price for the remaining three. According to the story Tarquin realised that he had lost an irretrievable opportunity to obtain great esoteric and political power. See John J. Collins: *Seers, Sibyls and Sages in the Hellenistic-Roman Judaism* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 181–198. See: *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary*, p. 626 and pp. 657–658. Virgil: *The Aeneid*: 4 10–12; 42 *Transl.* by C. Day Lewis *with an Introduction and Notes* by Jasper Griffen (Oxford, 1952), (repr. Oxford, 1989), Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 26*, Reuchlin to Jakob Lauber, pp. 81–89, here p. 88, and note 22.

have | various meanings to different people[427] and consequently discerning Jews would construe an exposition other than that taught to them by their parents. Then we would have to refrain from disputing with them. Eiij^{r} = XIX^{r}

Seventh: if we had no more dissenters to grapple with on the Scriptures, whether they are Jews or heathens, then we would disagree amongst ourselves in our schools of philosophy, as the human mind is never inactive. We would introduce new opinions or awaken old quarrels, as has happened recently with the discussion on Our Lady's conception[428] or with the question of whether St Paul had a wife,[429] or whether St Augustine was a monk,[430]

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[427] The usefulness of Jewish writings for Christian exegesis was not new and had been mentioned by scholars for centuries prior to Reuchlin's reference. The Inquisitor Hoogstraeten admitted that the Talmud contained passages dealing with the coming of the Messiah. H. Peterse: *Jacobus Hoogstraeten gegen Johannes Reuchlin*, p. 101.

[428] Reuchlin refers to the debates on the conception and birth of Jesus Christ by the Virgin Mary. This had led to a dispute between the two major clerical orders the Franciscan Observants and the Dominicans. Reuchlin became involved as he acted as a legal advisor to the Dominicans.

See Peter Dinzelbacher: *Bernhard von Clairvaux. Leben und Werk des berühmten Zisterziensers* (Darmstadt, 1998), pp. 71–75. Also the article by Hartmut Boockmann, 'Kirche und Frömmigkeit vor der Reformation', in G. Bott (ed.): *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 41–72, here p. 44. Dieter Koepplin, 'Reformation der Glaubensbilder: Das Erlösungswerk Christi auf Bildern des Spätmittelalters und der Reformationszeit', in G. Bott: *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland*, pp. 333–378. See the entry for 'Franz v. Retz' in: *LThK*, vol. 4, cols. 243–244. Also the entry for 'Franz v. Retz' in: *Verfasserlexikon*, ed. Ruh (1980) vol. 2, col. 834. Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 1, *Letter 128*, Petrus Siber to Reuchlin, pp. 398–401, here pp. 399–400, and note 1.

[429] Reuchlin was drawn into the debate through his acquaintance with a fellow humanist, Konrad Peutinger, who wrote an article in 1506, in which he expressed the opinion that St Paul had been married. This led to Peutinger being declared a liar by the prior of the Dominicans in Stuttgart. Peutinger wrote to Reuchlin for support, but Reuchlin, who did not fully agree with him, gave only cautious support, in a letter written in 1507. A theme that occupied many authors in the Late Middle Ages was whether marriage or a monastic life was the Christian ideal. The resolving of the question was given more emphasis during this era as humanists, in their studies of Augustine's writings, found references to his marriage and to his concubines. Thus theologians were confronted with reconciling Augustine's marriage with his monastic life. See the entry for 'Augustinus' in: *TRE*, vol. 4, pp. 691–721, and the reference to St Paul's concubines and to his marriage. See also the entry for 'Erasmus and the marriage debate' in: *TRE*, vol. 9, pp. 336–337. Ursula Rautenberg (ed.): *Über die Ehe*: *Von der Sachehe zur Liebesheirat* (Schweinfurt, 1993), pp. 45–86. See Dall'Asta (ed.): *Briefwechsel*, vol. 2, *Letter 141*, Reuchlin to Konrad Peutinger, pp. 60–65, here p. 65, and note 25.

[430] Reuchlin refers here to the trial of Jakob Wimpfeling for allegations he made in a script entitled *De integritate* (1505), in which he claims that many prominent theologians of the Church were not members of religious orders, among them St Augustine. This was in reality a critcism of the rivalry between the secular and regular clergy for spheres of influence in church affairs in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The mendicant Augustinian Hermit Order considered Wimpfeling's assertion an insult to their patron St Augustine and a criticism of their Order. Wimpfeling was arraigned before a Papal Court, but after

and many other foolish questions. This happens when we have nobody who dares to oppose us or with whom we can shed antlers. Consider the account of the history of Rome, when the third war against Carthage was being debated in the senate, Cato Censorinus[431]suggested that Carthage should be destroyed and razed to the ground. Scipio Nasica, however, advised against it saying that Carthage should be left standing, not for any love of the city, for he was just as much opposed to it as everyone else, but because he knew the Romans well enough and was certain that they would not remain passive. If they did not have a foreign war, then they would attack each other in a civil war in their own city, as indeed happened later, and all of Rome wished they had followed Scipio's advice.

Eighth: nothing will really be achieved if their books are burned only in the German lands, where the least number of Jews reside, for they have their own universities in Constantinople, in the Orient, also in Italy, and in other kingdoms, where they are free to read and learn all they desire.

Ninth: take our own religion as an example. The two emperors Diocletian and Maximian[432] issued a unanimous mandate in the eighth year of their reign commanding that all the Christian books should be burned. Accordingly, every official was ordered to search the area under his jurisdiction for

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intercessions made on his behalf he was eventually pardoned. See Dieter Mertens, 'Jakob Wimpfeling (1450–1528): Pädagogischer Humanismus', in Paul Gerhard Schmidt (ed.): *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten*: *Biographische Profile* (Stuttgart, 2000), pp. 35–57.

431 See Plutarch's *Cato* 27 as cited in *Augenspiegel*; ed. Ehlers (1999) *Reuchlin Werke*, p. 61. The third Punic war resulted in the destruction of Carthage (146 BC) in spite of the plea by the Roman Senator Publius Scipio Nasica Corculum who wished to retain Carthage as a Roman province. He was opposed by a number of senators, among them one of the most astute Roman politicians, Marcus Porcius Cato (234–149 BC) who only a few weeks before had preserved Rome from war against Rhodes. He held a decisive speech in which he demanded the destruction of Carthage, being convinced it was in Rome's best security interest. D. Kienast provides a detailed account of Cato's life and personality. On his foreign politics and on the destruction of Carthage see Dietmar Kienast: *Cato der Zensor*: *Seine Persönlichkeit und seine Zeit* (Heidelberg, 1954), pp. 116–133. For an English translation see *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* by Plutarch. Translated by John Dryden.

432 Diocletian, Valerius (AD 245–313) was a celebrated Roman emperor who ruled jointly with Maximian. Diocletian at first tolerated Christianity, but later reintroduced a heathen state religion which all citizens were obliged to practise. At the beginning of the year 303 edicts were passed ordering the destruction of churches and the confiscation of all religious books. Further coercive measures followed, among them an edict requiring all Christians to worship at pagan temples, which resulted in many persecutions and deaths of Christians in those parts of the Empire where the edicts were strictly enforced. See the entry for 'Diocletian' in: *TRE*, vol. 8, pp. 23–62. Roger Rees: *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy* (Edinburgh, 2004), pp. 59–71. Edith Mary Smallwood: *The Jews under Roman Rule*: *from Pompey to Diocletian. A Study in Political Relations* (Leiden, 1981).

Christian books, and thus the imperial magistrate named Magnianus came to Felix, Bishop of Thibiuka,[433] and to the priest Januarius,[434] also to Fortunatus[435] and Septimius[436] as they were supposed to have known best where to find the books in their areas. They answered: 'It | is written: Do not give dogs Eiij^{v} = XIX^{v}
what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine',[437] and rather than show him where they were, they died for it. Nonetheless the Christian books were destroyed, except for those that were securely hidden. After the deaths of the said emperors, heretics arose and wrote other books and gave them titles with names of saints, as if they were approved, namely: 'The Gospel of Thaddeus', 'The Gospel of St Thomas the Apostle', 'The Gospel of Barnabas the Apostle', 'The Gospel of Bartholomew', 'The Gospel of Andrew the Apostle' and many other such books as are listed in the code of Canon Law;[438]

xv. dis. c. Sancta romana ecclesia §. *Que vero*. This went on until all the old books were gathered together from the far-reaching Roman Empire, in the East and West, and were examined and approved by subsequent Councils. There is no evidence, however, that less people became Christians, than if such books had not been burned. On the contrary, the Christian Church

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433 Felix was Bishop of (Tibiuca) Thibiuka (N. Africa), and one of the martyrs executed in the third century for refusing to surrender the holy books during Diocletian's reign. Details of his life are sketchy, but he was listed as one of the Roman martyrs in the early Church. See R. Rees: *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*, p. 62, and p. 179. Also 'Felix v. Thibiuca', in: *LThK*, vol. 4, cols. 70–71.

434 Januarius, according to a legend from the early Church, was one of the seven sons of St Felicity, who were martyred together with their mother during the period of persecution of Christians in the second century. See the entry for 'Felicitas' in: *LThK*, vol. 4, cols. 66–76.

435 Fortunatus of Carthage's name appears among the list of African martyrs. A bishop of a similar name is mentioned as having attended the Synod of Carthage in AD 256 and became involved in the debates on lapsed Christians during the Decian persecutions. Again here details of his life are rather limited. See the entry for 'Fortunatus v. Karthago' in: *LThK*, vol. 4, col. 223.

436 Unknown.

437 Matt. 7, 6.

438 Reuchlin refers to the apocryphal literature of the second century, in particular to the gospels written by Gnostics. The Catholic Church excluded all such literature from the Canon of texts in the Catholic Bible, as the authors were unknown or their writings declared heretical and hence not in accordance with the Church's teachings. The Gospel of Bartholomew is first mentioned by St Jerome. Its origin is uncertain, but there are original versions in Greek, Latin and Slavic languages extant. The Gospel of Thaddeus was based on a Gnostic text that claimed that there was a correspondence between Jesus and Abgar, in which the latter asks Jesus to come and heal him. The Gospel of St Thomas first appeared in Greek, probably in Syria where the Apostle Judas Thomas was held in great esteem. See Berthold Altaner, and Alfred Stuiber (eds.): *Patrologie. Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter* (Freiburg, 1978), pp. 117–139. See the entry for 'Evangelien, II Apokryphe E.' in: *LThK*; vol. 3, cols. 1217–1233.

subsequently grew and became stronger than ever before. The same would also happen here. If the Jews were to see that we used force to suppress their sacred objects, it would strengthen their resolve to die in their Jewish faith, as they believe as martyrs,[439] and would encourage their wives and children to be more firm and steadfast in their faith.

Therefore Canon Law in *c. sicut. iude. ex. de iu.*, forbids us to confiscate anything that belongs to the Jews, which is lawfully theirs, be it money or valuables, as may be defined by the term 'money' (*pecunia*); i. q. iij totum. And whoever contravenes that law shall be removed from his office and titles or have the ban imposed on him, i.e. be excommunicated, until such time as sufficient restitution has been made. It is a principle of law that the ban is applied only for a mortal sin; *xi. q. iij. c. Nemo*. If it is a sin, then it is not praiseworthy to God. This Church commandment applies to all kings and emperors insofar as they are Christians. The Imperial code has also adopted this article in, *l. Christianis. C. de paga.*, and prescribed as compensation double the cost of the damage caused.[440] And whichever authority or officials permit such to take place shall also be punished as if they had perpetrated the act themselves. If the Jews keep the peace, then they should also be left in peace; *dictit. l. Christianis*. We treat them in this manner, so they may not say we forced or coerced them into our faith.

Eiv^{r} = XX^{r} Therefore the holy Apostle | St Paul writes, 1Thess, 4[441] 'But we exhort you, brethren, to aspire to live quietly, so that you may command the respect of outsiders, and be dependent on nobody'. That means we should not molest those who are not Christians, nor desire to obtain their possessions. Thus we should not baptise their children against their will;[442] *glo. in ca. iudeorum filios xxviij. q. i.* That is also the opinion of the teachers of the Holy Scriptures, for example Augustine of Ancona,[443] in 'Summary of ecclesiastical power, question 24' (*Summa de ecclesiastica potestate q. xxiiij*). This text can be

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439 H. Graetz states that due to the constant danger to Judaism at this period of history, Jewish believers had prepared a special dying confession to have at hand should they be required to suffer death for their faith. Heinrich Graetz, 'Von der Verbannung der Juden aus Spanien und Portugal bis zur dauernden Ansiedelung der Marranen in Holland (1618)', in idem: *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, vol. 9 (Leipzig, 1866), p. 57. See also *Gutachten* ed., Leinz-von Dessauer, (1965) p. 115, and note 37.

440 Reuchlin emphasises that the Jews were given extensive protection during the period of their subjugation in the Roman Empire.

441 1Thess. 4, 10–12.

442 See Commentary, p. 34. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, pp. 1–14.

443 He supports his argument by citing Augustine of Ancona who says that neither children nor adults should be forced to convert to Christianity. G. Kisch: *Zasius und Reuchlin*, p. 29; p. 77, and note 13.

interpreted to mean that one should also not confiscate their books against their will, for books to some people are as dear as children. It is said that poets regard the books they have written to be their children. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that if anyone should confiscate a Jew's books in order to convert him to the Christian faith it would be a form of coercion; *glo. super ver. licentiam in fi. xlv. dis. c. Qui. syncera.*

As, however, our most Gracious Lord, the Roman Emperor, also commanded Your Princely Grace to obtain counsel, in which manner, on what basis in law, the matter is to be approached, and by which procedure, and which Your Grace imposed on me for consideration and counsel, I truly cannot advise you better than that, according to my humble understanding of the case, the Imperial Majesty should decree, for the will of God and our Christian faith, that two maintained positions of master should be established at every university in the German speaking lands for a period of ten years. These masters should be competent and able to teach and instruct the students and pupils in the Hebrew language, in accordance with the Clementine decrees and ordinances; *sub titulo de magistris prima*. In order to equip those faculties, Jews who are resident in our lands should be of assistance to us, out of good neighbourly relations, and willingly loan their books, in return of course for a substantial deposit, and care will be taken to protect them from damage, until such time as we have copied them or printed our own. For I have no doubt, that in a few years our students will then be so proficient in the Hebrew language, that they will be able to bring the Jews to us with gentle persuasion, through logical and amiable arguments, in accordance with the Canon Law ordinance; *c. qui sincera et. c. de iude. xlv. dis*., which expressly states: 'Whosoever because of his sincere Christian conviction wants to bring those outside our religion to the true faith, should do so with mild words and not with harsh | fixed opinions, so Eiv^{v} = XX^{v} that those who are disinclined or unwilling are not driven away, but whose spirit, goodness and reason could lead them to abandon their false path. And so that those others may be unmasked, who under the guise of wishing to abandon the common practice of their religion are not acting in God's favour, but acting in their own interest. We should treat them therefore in such a manner that they are moved to follow us more by reason and friendly words rather than flee from us and with God's help, and with what is evident in their very own books, we may be able to convert them to Our Mother, the Christian Church'.[444]

[444] He considers this passage in the Canonical ordinances to be so vital to his counsel that he quotes it directly. However, as F. Lotter points out, he chose to ignore the second part

This is almost a literal quotation of the words of the Canon Law ordinance; *dicit. ca. qui sincera*, on how we should treat the Jews in this matter, and the above cited Canon Law, *de iudeis ea. dis*. confirms it.

In what concerns the Jews the Holy Council commands us: 'That from now on we must not coerce anyone to believe', for 'God has mercy upon whomever he wills, and he hardens the heart of whomever he wills.'[445] 'Thus such people are not to be brought unwillingly to salvation, but willingly, so that the letter and spirit of the law remains untarnished.' Based on these two aforecited codes of laws, namely, the Clementines and the distinctive parts of the Decretals, we have come to the final conclusion, that the entire subject of this case namely: the Jewish books, should not be burned, and with God's help they [the Jewish believers] should be persuaded by convincing and sensible disputations and be led to our faith in a fair and gentle manner.

My Most High and Mighty Prince, and Gracious Lord, I wish to submit this script and counsel to Your Princely Grace as my archbishop, and declare to have written nothing but that which is permitted by Your Princely Grace and by the Holy Christian Church.

I solemnly declare this herewith and sign.

Your Princely Grace's most obedient and loyal servant.

Dated Stuttgart, 6th October, in the year 1510.

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of the same text which referred to how one was to treat cases where forced conversion had taken place. There a much more restrictive approach was applied. Thus, if a person had been forcibly baptised he remained a Christian, and under no circumstances could that person be permitted to return to his former religion or, in the case of children, to that of their parents. See F. Lotter, 'Der Rechtsstatus der Juden in den Schriften Reuchlins zum Pfefferkornstreit', p. 77, and note 60.

[445] Rom. 9, 18.

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AUGENSPIEGEL/
[Thomas Anshelm, Tübingen, August–September 1511].
(Underneath) woodcut: pair of spectacles with a laurel wreath in both lenses.
Am end dißes büchleins findt man ain correctur etlicher wör/ ter so inn dem truck versehen sind im teutschen vnnd latin/ bezaich/ net durch die zal der bletter
University of Tübingen (Signatur Ci VIII 28 R).

Doctor Johannsen Reuchlins/ der K.M. als Ertzhertzogen zu Osterreich auch Chur/ fürsten vnd fürsten gemainen bundtrichters inn/ Schwaben warhafftige entschuldigung/ gegen vnd wider ains getaufften iuden/ genant Pfefferkorn vormals ge/ truckt ußgangen vnwarhaf / tigs schmachbüchlin/
AUGENSPIEGEL/ (Underneath) woodcut: pair of spectacles but without laurel wreaths in the lenses.
Am end dißes büchleins findt man ain correctur etlicher wör/ ter so inn dem truck versehen sind im teutschen vnnd latin/ bezaich/ net durch die zal der bletter
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